TOGETHER FOR THE MED

SUMMARY OF THE WEBINAR

Understanding and Using Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) to Achieve the 30x30 Target in the Mediterranean

Organised by

UN environment programme | Mediterranean Action Plan Barcelona Convention | SPA/RAC | IUCN | BLUE SEEDS

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WEBINAR OVERVIEW

This webinar was co-organized by the Specially Protected Area Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC) under the Barcelona Convention, IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation, and BlueSeeds under the Together for the MED partnership.

Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) were designed as a tool to support the achievement of Target 3 of the CBD Global Biodiversity Framework, as well as the Barcelona Convention Post-2020 Regional Strategy for Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MCPAs) and OECMs in the Mediterranean, which calls for the protection of 30% of the sea by 2030 (30x30). They aim to account for areas that support the conservation of biodiversity but do not fit the definition of protected areas. However, this tool still faces implementation challenges, due to difficulties in understanding the concept and the complexity of its administrative pathway. This is particularly true for marine and coastal OECMs that are still rare, and even more so in the Mediterranean basin. With less than four years remaining until 2030, only 8.8% of the Mediterranean Sea is currently under some form of protection, an increase of just 1% since 2020. In this context, OECMs are seen as a necessary measure to reach the 30 by 30 target, and stakeholders are showing a growing interest in understanding and using it, notably in the marine context. Several tools and documents have been designed to support this process of assessment and recognition to move marine and coastal OECMs from concept to practice.

Drawing on contributions from a high-level panel of experts, this webinar provides insights into the definitions, applications, and effectiveness of OECMs. It also presents the latest tools supporting their implementation and addresses frequently asked questions related to their functioning, scope, and distinction from other conservation instruments.

EXPERT PANEL

YAPRAK ARDA

Marine Programme Officer

IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation

ASMA KHERIJI

Specially Protected Area (SPA) Programme Manager

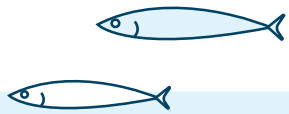
SPA/RAC (UNEP-MAP)

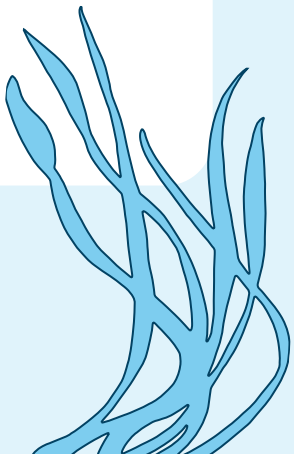
FRANÇOIS SIMARD

Independent expert

SUE WELLS

Independent expert





OECM BACKGROUND AND DEFINTION

FRANÇOIS SIMARD

Independent expert

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

OECMs originated at COP 10 in Nagoya (2010), when the 10% marine protection target was established. The concept emerged from recognising that managed areas such as military zones and fisheries reserves were achieving conservation outcomes despite not being designated as protected areas. However, OECMs were formally defined only in 2018 within the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

> **Protected areas are created *for* conservation, while OECMs are mainly created for *other* purposes while *delivering* conservation outcomes.**

Because of their name and the reference to "other" conservation measures, OECMs were initially perceived as a loosely defined conservation tool offering a wide range of possibilities—an ambiguity that can be referred to as the "original sin" of OECMs.

OFFICIAL DEFINITION

OECMs are basically areas managed for purposes other than conservation, yet delivering positive conservation outcomes. More precisely, an OECM is "*a geographically defined area other than a protected area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in-situ conservation of biodiversity with associated ecosystem functions and services, and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socioeconomic, and other locally relevant values*". [1]

[1] https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-14/cop-14-dec-08-en.pdf

KEY DISTINCTIONS FROM PROTECTED AREAS

The fundamental difference lies in their primary objective: Protected areas are created *for* conservation, while OECMs are mainly created for *other* purposes while *delivering* conservation outcomes.

In that sense, they may even be stronger conservation measures than MPAs considered "paper parks", as these have not yet demonstrated actual conservation results.

CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR OECM RECOGNITION

Geographically defined boundaries

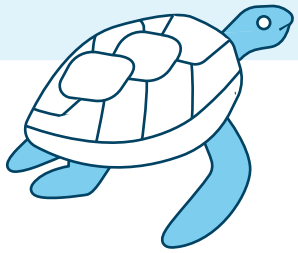
(can include vertical parameters and/or mobile physical features like thermal fronts for marine areas)

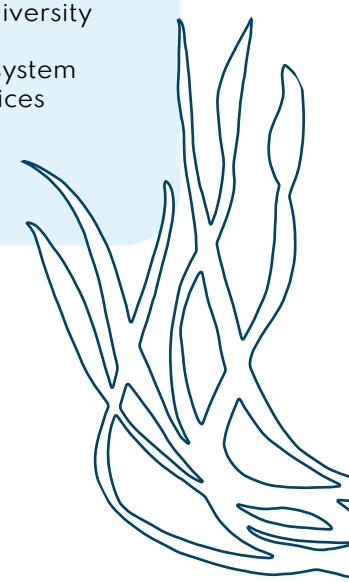
Active governance & management

Long-term commitment (no planned end date)

Demonstrated positive conservation outcomes

Protection of biodiversity and ecosystem services





CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES CATEGORIES

According to the guidelines, OECMs may have biodiversity conservation as a primary, secondary or ancillary objective:

PRIMARY CONSERVATION

The primary goal of the area is the conservation of biodiversity; such an area may be reported as OECMs ***only*** if the governing authority does not want the area to be classified as a protected area. For example, a government may not want to include private and community-managed sites in the official list of protected areas but may accept OECM designation for these sites.

SECONDARY CONSERVATION

An area where the primary goal is another purpose (e.g., aquaculture, fisheries) and conservation is a secondary objective, can be assessed against the OECM criteria and if they meet them, can be reported as an OECM.

ANCILLARY CONSERVATION

Areas not dedicated to conservation, but which achieve in-situ biodiversity conservation outcomes, can be considered assessed against the OECM criteria.

BEYOND PROTECTED AREAS: NAVIGATING THE OECM PATHWAY

YAPRAK ARDA

Marine Programme Officer

IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation

OECMs must meet specific criteria, obtain stakeholders consent, and be monitored regularly to ensure long-term biodiversity conservation is maintained. While OECMs can contribute to achieving global conservation targets, they require careful management and monitoring. They must be reported to relevant databases (see *Reporting and database management* section) in order to be counted towards the 30x30 target.

CURRENT GLOBAL STATUS

Data on global protected area coverage can be found on the Protected Planet website. Current coverage of protection is as follows:

TERRESTRIAL AND INLAND WATER

16.5% protected globally (17.5% with OECMs)

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

9.6% globally (slightly higher with OECMs)

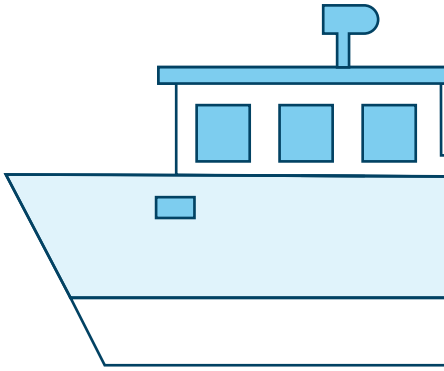
MEDITERRANEAN

Terrestrial OECMs exist, but no marine OECMs have yet been reported [2]

[2] https://www.protectedplanet.net/en

> **OECMs [...] must be reported to relevant databases in order to be counted towards the 30x30 target.**

The identification and recognition of OECMs is a long-term process which requires data and evaluation. This process, as detailed in the IUCN Guidance on OECMs, is summarised below.



THREE-STEPS IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

STEP 1: SCREENING

Initial assessment using 2 criteria:

- Not already designated as a protected area
- Reasonable likelihood that the site supports important biodiversity values

Output: Potential OECM identified

STEP 2: STAKEHOLDER CONSENT

Securing free, prior, and informed consent from all key stakeholders

Includes governing authorities, Indigenous peoples, local communities, and rights holders

Output: Candidate OECM with stakeholders approval

STEP 3: FULL ASSESSMENT

Comprehensive evaluation using 6 criteria: Geographically defined area; Important biodiversity; Governed and managed; In situ conservation; Sustained governance and management; Equitable governance and management

Output: Either a confirmed OECM or a candidate OECM requiring additional work

REPORTING AND DATABASE MANAGEMENT

Confirmed OECMs must be reported to the World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDCPA) (a unified database formed from the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) and the World Database on Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (WD-OECM)). It is managed by UNEP-WCMC with the support of the IUCN WCPA. For the Mediterranean, reporting also goes through MAPAMED (managed by UNEP/MAP SPA/RAC and MedPAN). Only OECMs officially reported to the global databases are counted towards Target 3 of the 30x30 framework.

MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

Regular monitoring is necessary to provide evidence that an area is achieving long-term biodiversity conservation. Data related to the OECM must be retained and made publicly available, together with reports summarising monitoring results. Associated databases should be updated on a monthly basis, incorporating newly collected data as well as revisions to existing records.

MEDITERRANEAN OECM GUIDANCE DEVELOPMENT

ASMA KHERIJI

Specially Protected Area (SPA) Programme Manager

SPA/RAC (UNEP-MAP)

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The SPA/RAC is actively involved in the support and implementation of the CBD Target 3, and the development and implementation of the Barcelona Convention Post-2020 Regional Strategy for Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MCPAs) and Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in the Mediterranean [3] that calls for 30% of protection in the Mediterranean Sea.

> **The SPA/RAC has also developed a strategic and technical guidance in order to support countries in the implementation and evaluation of OECMs.**

In addition, the SPA/RAC has developed the post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity (SAPBIO) [4], aligned with the 30x30 target.

The Post-2020 Regional Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs is structured around five main pillars:

1. Governance of MCPAs and OECMs
2. MCPA coverage increase
3. Marine and coastal OECMs (dedicated strategic pillar)
4. MCPA management effectiveness
5. Action and support for MCPAs and OECMs

[3] https://legacy.spa-rac.org/en/publication/download/1538/post-2020-regional-strategy-for-marine-and-coastal-protected-areas-and-other-effective-area-based-conservation-measures-in-the-mediterranean

[4] https://www.rac-spa.org/sites/default/files/doc_spa-bio/post_2020_sapbio.pdf

The SPA/RAC has also developed a strategic and technical guidance in order to support countries in the implementation and

evaluation of OECMs, in close collaboration with its SPA/BD Focal Points and its Ad hoc Group of Experts for Marine Protected Areas (AGEM). This Guidance document provides technical information has several objectives. First, it aims to clarify the OECM concept in the Mediterranean context and explain the complementarity between MPAs and OECMs, as this distinction has proven unclear to many stakeholders. Second, it supports Mediterranean countries in the identification, recognition, and reporting of OECMs. Finally, it provides a step-by-step approach tailored to the Mediterranean region for the identification and reporting of OECMs.

PILOT TESTING PHASE

Three volunteer countries participated in a testing phase: Morocco, Libya, and Lebanon. This testing phase helped adjust the guidance and revealed practical challenges in applying OECM criteria.

Examples included archaeological coastal sites in Libya and community-managed areas in Lebanon.

NEXT STEPS

The Guidance document is currently being finalized and will soon be available, including a French translation. A dedicated webinar for dissemination of the document to all Mediterranean countries will be organised by the SPA/RAC during 2026.

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR MARINE OECMs

SUE WELLS

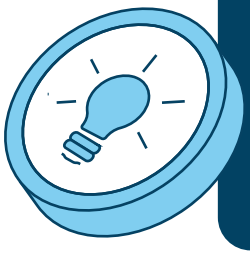
Independent expert

As the definition of OECMs is not always clearly understood, their implementation also remains complex. However, their identification could help Mediterranean countries achieve the 30x30 target. OECMs represent a complementary tool to MPAs, allowing reporting of areas that are already managed in such a way that they achieve biodiversity conservation, even though they are not protected areas.

The SPA/RAC Guidance is designed to help identify marine and coastal OECMs in Mediterranean countries. It provides a framework to assist countries using the existing OECM guidance and is intended primarily for national administrations, their partner NGOs and all involved in identifying and reporting OECMs. It is not prescriptive in nature.

The Guidance comprises 7 sections:

1. Background to OECMs
2. Internationally recognised guidance for reporting and identifying OECMs
3. Designing a national process, which is a key first step
4. Guidance for identifying OECMs in the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment
5. What types of areas might be suitable for OECM assessment
6. Additional points to consider when identifying marine OECMs (OECMs)
7. Reporting confirmed OECMs



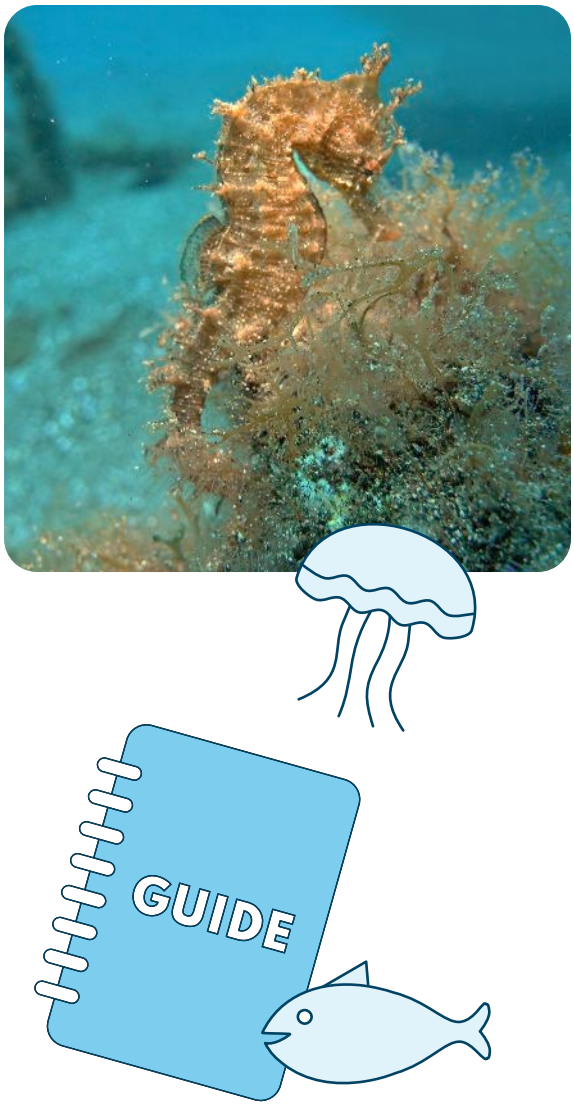
“Countries can begin identifying marine OECMs, but for larger offshore areas, regional or bilateral processes will often be needed.

The two annexes describe:

1. Progress in identifying OECMs in the Mediterranean,
2. Examples of national guidance and processes developed in different countries, which gives information on experiences from outside of the Mediterranean.

The Guidance places emphasis on the existing global guidance and information:

- IUCN WCPA Site Assessment Tool [5];
- IUCN WCPA 2024 Detailed Guidance with case studies [6];
- FAO Guide for Fisheries-based OECMs [7];
- GFCM Mediterranean Fisheries Assessment (2022) [8];
- The Marine OECM Guide from Oregon State University will shortly be published and covers all marine sectors, not just fisheries [9];
- BirdLife Position Paper on Marine OECMs concerning sectors (including windfarms, oil farms and gas sectors, shipping) with initial advice on whether areas managed by these sectors might initially meet the criteria of potential OECMs [10];



Identifying marine OECMs is likely to be more difficult than identifying terrestrial ones for the same reasons that effective management of marine protected areas is often more challenging than terrestrial ones. Data are harder to collect in the marine environment, it is a three-dimensional system, and humans tend to manage and impact these areas from a terrestrial perspective. Although our knowledge of marine systems is improving rapidly, it still lags behind what we know about terrestrial environments. Some of the earliest marine OECMs were reported for Canada where the national guidance was designed in 2022 after a long preparatory process, and already more than 40 OECMs were reported, including marine refuges and historic shipwrecks.

[5] https://www.iucn.org/our-work/protected-areas/protected-area-management-effectiveness-pame
[6] https://iucn.org/resources/publication/guidance-other-effective-area-based-conservation-measures-oecms
[7] https://elearning.fao.org/course/view.php?id=1076
[8] https://www.fao.org/gfcm/publications/somfi/somfi2022/en/
[9] https://sites.google.com/view/the-marine-oecm-guide/home
[10] https://www.birdlife.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/BirdLife_Position-Paper_EU-Targets-for-Protected-Areas-and-Restoration-at-Sea_December-2021.pdf

There has been some progress in the Mediterranean, including a regional initiative led by the GFCM. In 2022, an expert meeting in Rome carried out an initial screening of eight fisheries management areas, focusing particularly on fisheries restricted areas with strict controls, which are considered the most likely candidates. This was only an initial screening (essentially step one of the IUCN site assessment tool) and it quickly became clear that more information was needed on conservation values, monitoring, and biodiversity outcomes.

The example of the Velebit Channel in Croatia illustrates this process well. It passed the initial screening questions, showing that it is a geographically defined area with management and known biodiversity benefits. However, it now needs to proceed to the next steps: securing consent from relevant actors and undertaking the full detailed assessment using the IUCN tool.

Following 2022, the process was hindered by several important constraints, including the need for this process to be country-led and, for marine areas that are shared between countries, the need for an additional layer of consultation. In some cases, countries may decide to work through regional bodies such as the GFCM. More information can be found on the GFCM website.

For smaller inshore marine OECMs, the process may be relatively straightforward. There is a promising example from Libya involving an archaeological coastal site where access restrictions are protecting biodiversity, with potential to extend management into adjacent marine areas. Lebanon also presented an example of a community-managed beach area, with questions about extending protection offshore. These examples show that countries can begin identifying marine OECMs, but for larger offshore areas, regional or bilateral processes will often be needed.

CONCLUSION

OECMs represent both an opportunity and a challenge for conservation in the Mediterranean Sea. While they offer a pathway to recognize and enhance conservation efforts across multiple sectors, they require rigorous assessment, genuine stakeholder engagement, and long-term commitment. The next four years before the 2030 milestone are critical for translating commitments into measurable biodiversity outcomes.

OECMs are not a shortcut to achieving conservation targets; they require the same level of management effectiveness and conservation outcomes as protected areas, albeit with different primary objectives and involving different actors. Success depends on strong national processes, cross-sectoral collaboration, and commitment to long-term biodiversity conservation.

While OECMs represent a valuable tool for protecting areas beyond formally designated MPAs, no marine OECMs have yet been officially recognised in the Mediterranean Sea, highlighting the complexity of the assessment and recognition process. Tools and guidelines developed by IUCN Med and the SPA/RAC are forthcoming and will be supported by hands-on capacity-building events to provide the necessary push for the recognition of these areas, key to reach 30% of protection of the Mediterranean Sea by 2030.

OPPORTUNITIES AND BENEFITS OF OECMs

FOR NON-CONSERVATION AGENCIES

- Recognition of conservation values in their work
- Opportunities for collaboration with conservation agencies
- Enhanced action through partnerships
- Access to new funding opportunities

FOR CONSERVATION GOALS

- Fill gaps in protected area networks
- Incentivize improved management across sectors
- Recognize existing conservation efforts
- Contribute to 30x30 targets
- Promote cross-sectoral collaboration

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

IS THERE A PLACE WHERE ALL EXISTING EFFICIENCY MEASUREMENT TOOLS ARE LISTED WITH A COMPARISON OF WHAT EACH ONE DOES?

The answer currently is no, but there are various initiatives under discussion as it is recognised as a real need.

Firstly, the WDPA and WD-OECM User Manual [11] includes a list of protected area management effectiveness (PAME) tools [12]. Tools originally developed to assess the effectiveness of protected areas could be applied to support the identification of OECMs at site level. Furthermore, the IUCN Green List Standard can be used for OECMs. If a site meets these requirements but is not managed with the primary objective of conservation, it could potentially qualify as an OECM. In addition, a workshop at the International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC5) in Vancouver, resulted in a paper that provides an overview of PAME tools.

IUCN WCPA is currently looking at the potential for a platform to list PAME and other tools.

WHO IS ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR VERIFYING WHETHER ALL OECM CRITERIA ARE MET?

Currently, there is no formal international verification mechanism to confirm whether sites reported as Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) fully meet the established criteria. Governments are responsible for submitting data, which are then compiled in a global database managed by the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC). However, UNEP-WCMC does not have a mandate to independently verify or challenge the information reported by countries.

Additional databases, such as the MPA Atlas, contain quality-checked data that may offer higher accuracy, though these datasets do not always align with national reporting. Ideally, the World Database on Protected Areas (WDCPA) would include structured fields documenting key details of OECM assessments—such as what was assessed, when and where the assessment took place, who conducted it, and the results. This information could support greater transparency and enable external review or verification by other stakeholders.

Looking ahead, a more structured follow-up mechanism for OECMs may be introduced. UNEP-WCMC and the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas' Protected Planet Specialist Group are planning to establish a new task force that could help strengthen oversight and verification processes.

REGARDING SCIENTIFIC MONITORING TO ASSESS INCREASES IN BIODIVERSITY: ARE THERE GUIDELINES REGARDING WHICH ANALYSES NEED TO BE APPLIED AND WHETHER SPECIFIC INDICES ARE USED?

At present, the main reference remains the international recognition process outlined in the IUCN Guidance on OECMs, which provides the most comprehensive framework for identification, assessment, and reporting:

https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/GPG-036-En.pdf

[11] Prot. Planet, "World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA / Protected Planet)"

[12] https://resources.unep-wcmc.org/products/WCMC_CB007

IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA, NO OECMS EXIST, SO ARE OECMS TRULY MANAGED IN ACTION? ARE THERE EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL OECM EXPERIENCES ELSEWHERE?

One frequently cited example comes from Canada, where several marine OECMs have been recognised and implemented: https://canadaconservation.ca/home/conserving-lands/oecm-examples/ but more examples can be found in the Protected Planet website [13].

THERE ARE SOME CASES IN THE MED WHERE OLD OIL AND GAS PLATFORM BECAME IMPORTANT PLACES FOR SPECIES RECOVERY AND TURTLE RELEASES. CAN THESE PLACES FOR EXAMPLE BE DEFINED AS OECM?

ALSO, COULD ALL FRAs POTENTIALLY QUALIFY AS OECMs? IF SO, SHOULD THEY NOT ALL BE ASSESSED AND CONSIDERED FOR INCLUSION?

Oil and gas platform, aquafarms and FRAs could be recognised as OECMs if:

1. They actually deliver biodiversity conservation.
2. They are set up in the long-term (ideally with no end point, at least not less than 20 years which would be considered short term).
3. They are managed for biodiversity conservation, or at minimum for preventing harmful actions.

However, oil and gas platforms should be approached with particular caution. There must be a detailed review and assessment. Indeed, they probably do not fit the basic objective of OECMs which is delivering actual biodiversity conservation!

Concerning FRAs specifically: they have been created to protect biodiversity from fishing impacts and so have clear conservation objectives. However, an assessment of a fishery-based OECM needs an assessment of threats from all forms of negative impact, not just fishing, and requires collaboration between fisheries and environment authorities.

IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, THERE ARE SPECIFIC FISHERIES AREAS, SUCH AS DEEP-SEA SHRIMP FISHING GROUNDS AND BLUEFIN TUNA FISHING AREAS. SOME OF THESE SPECIFIC FISHERIES AREAS ARE MANAGED UNDER FORMAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLANS. CAN SUCH FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLANS BE CONSIDERED AS OECMs?

IF SO, CAN FISHERIES AREAS MANAGED UNDER THESE PLANS BE RECOGNIZED AS CONTRIBUTING TO THE 30×30 CONSERVATION TARGET, EVEN IF THEY ARE NOT DESIGNATED AS MARINE PROTECTED AREAS?

Fishing grounds cannot be considered as OECMs for several reasons. The major ones are that they don't deliver conservation, they are not declared areas with clear boundaries and they are not long-term.

For FRAs the logic is different and, in some cases, they could be considered as OECMs if their primary objective is biodiversity conservation. There are 2 main issues though. Are FRAs able to prevent threats from sectors other than fisheries? If they do, might it be possible to declare the area as an MPA?

Concerning FRAs, there are ongoing discussions with FAO-GFCM in the Mediterranean regarding FRAs and OECMs.

[13] https://www.protectedplanet.net/en/news-and-stories

More information can be found online:

https://www.fao.org/gfcm/publications/somfi/state-of-the-mediterranean-and-black-sea-fisheries-2025/en/ and also https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cc3307en

ARE ALL EXISTING OECMs UNDER ACTIVE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING? EVEN AQUAFARMS?

Based on the definition, an OECM must be governed and managed in ways that result in long-term, effective in-situ biodiversity conservation. That is why monitoring of OECMs is crucial. There are no aquafarms declared as OECMs.

DOU YOU CONSIDER THAT THE NATURA 2000 NETWORK IN EUROPE WOULD BE MORE APPROPRIATELY INCLUDED AS OECMs INSTEAD OF PAs?

This depends on whether Natura 2000 sites are recognised as protected areas by the country concerned. In most EU Member States, Natura 2000 sites are considered protected areas.

If someone questions whether Natura 2000 sites are delivering successful conservation results, but they are already designated as protected area, the priority is to improve their management so that they are effective, rather than re-identifying them as OECMs. If a site is not being effective in achieving biodiversity conservation, it would not, in any case, qualify as an OECM.

IS IT POSSIBLE TO HAVE BUFFER AREA?

Some protected areas have buffer areas that are not considered as part of the protected area. If the area included within the buffer zone meets all the criteria and is achieving the expected conservation benefits, the whole part could be considered as an OECM.

SOME COUNTRIES REFUSE TO CREATE NEW MARINE PROTECTED AREAS BECAUSE OF THE COST AND OPERATIONAL BURDEN (MONITORING, SURVEILLANCE, ETC.) THAT THIS REPRESENTS. WHAT ABOUT OECMs? ARE THE COSTS ESTIMATED TO BE LOWER?

A direct cost comparison between MPAs and OECMs is not straightforward. OECMs are not cost-free, as effective recognition requires monitoring, evaluation, and governance support. Cost implications vary significantly depending on context and institutional arrangements.

The costs of OECMs in terms of assessment and management are probably quite similar to the ones of MPAs. However, the burden of these costs will not be on the same institution. For example, if a FRA is recognized as an OECM, the burden of management will lie on the fisheries institutions which create the FRA.

IS THERE A RISK THAT GOVERNMENTS WILL BE MORE INCLINED TO CREATE OECMs RATHER THAN MPA?

The decision may mostly relate on the objective of recognition. If the primary objective is conservation, the area should be presented as a protected area, not an OECM. OECMs should be used when the primary goal is something else (fisheries, aquaculture, wind farms) but conservation is a secondary or ancillary objective.

However, some countries may use OECMs as temporary designations for long-delayed MPAs to meet targets, though this is not recommended by the OECM expert network.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE GUIDELINES IS VERY DIFFICULT, ESPECIALLY AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL. EVEN THOUGH WE HAVE GOOD TOOLS TO DO THIS, WE NEED MORE INVOLVEMENT FROM GOVERNMENTS AND ALL STAKEHOLDERS. WHAT, THEN, IS THE KEY TO ENGAGING ALL ACTORS TO ACT?

Countries have obligations towards meeting the global targets, this could be an important aspect of increasing the key engagement of authorities. In terms of actors and relevant stakeholders, as in protected areas, they would need to understand the importance of creating an OECM in order to be fully engaged.

HOW CAN AN NGO HELP US SECURE 'FREE, PRIOR, AND INFORMED CONSENT' (FPIC) BEFORE OUR LAND IS REPORTED AS AN OECM TO THE WORLD DATABASE?

NGOs can play crucial roles in identification and reporting of potential OECMs, including stakeholders into the processes and giving some support on assessments and monitoring.

The second step of OECM identification is to involve a maximum of local stakeholders including local NGOs that have done some work on the potential OECM and contact the assessor to give information or tools that can be useful to qualify the OECM. Data provided by a non-administrative organisation should be authenticated and verified by the state relevant authorities.

USEFUL LINKS OR DOCUMENTS SHARED DURING THE PRESENTATION

TOOLS AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS

1. Site-level tool for identifying OECMs (EN) – https://iucn.org/story/202308/site-level-tool-identifying-other-effective-area-based-conservation-measures-oecms
2. Tool for identifying OECMs – French version – https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/PATRS-006-Fr.pdf
3. IUCN WCPA – Protected Area Management Effectiveness (PAME) tools – https://www.iucn.org/our-work/protected-areas/protected-area-management-effectiveness-pame
4. IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas – Green List framework (applicable to OECMs) – https://iucngreenlist.org/

DATABASES AND PLATFORMS

5. Explore the World's Protected Areas – https://www.protectedplanet.net
6. World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA / Protected Planet) – https://www.protectedplanet.net/en/thematic-areas/wdpa
7. MAPAMED – Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas Database – https://www.mapamed.org/
8. Marine Protection Atlas (MPA Atlas) – https://mpatlas.org/

ONLINE TRAINING AND COURSES

9. FAO – Introduction to other effective area-based conservation measures in marine fisheries – https://elearning.fao.org/course/view.php?id=1076

REPORTS, GUIDES AND PUBLICATIONS

10. UICN France – Rapport AMCEZ (2022) – https://uicn.fr/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/rapport_amcez_vf.pdf
11. IUCN 2024 Detailed Guidance with case studies - https://iucn.org/resources/publication/guidance-other-effective-area-based-conservation-measures-oecms
12. User Manual for the World Database on Protected Areas and World Database on Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures – https://resources.unep-wcmc.org/products/WCMC_CB007
13. GFCM Mediterranean Fisheries Assessment (2022) - https://www.fao.org/gfcm/publications/somfi/somfi2022/en/

14. Marine OECM Guide – Oregon State University (forthcoming, 2026) – https://sites.google.com/view/the-marine-oecm-guide/home
15. Cook et al. (2025) – What Will Count? Conservation Letters – https://doi.org/10.1111/conl.13150
16. BirdLife_Position-Paper - EU-Targets-for-Protected-Areas-and-Restoration-at-Sea_December-2021 - https://www.birdlife.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/BirdLife_Position-Paper_EU-Targets-for-Protected-Areas-and-Restoration-at-Sea_December-2021.pdf

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS MENTIONED

17. ICCAT – International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas – https://www.iccat.int
18. SPA/RAC – Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre: https://spa-rac.org/en/
19. Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) Barcelona Convention – https://www.unep-map.org

ABOUT

TOGETHER FOR THE MED

Since 2017, the Together for the Med partnership has united 50 Mediterranean organisations across 15 countries to drive impactful, science-based conservation efforts. Our mission is to reduce fishing pressures on Mediterranean biodiversity and protect coastal ecosystems and communities.

The partnership brings together a wide range of complementary members—international and local NGOs, global organisations, private companies, and research institutes. Each contributes strengths that, together, make us more effective. Our network spans the Mediterranean basin, with partners and fieldwork sites located across all shores.

LEARN MORE AT:

www.togetherforthemed.org