



Call for Small Projects

Strengthen the level of effective protection in Mediterranean MPAs

RULES



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With the financial support of:

Pew Bertarelli
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The MedPAN association supports Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) through the [Call for Small Projects](#) mechanism.

These small projects provide direct support to MPAs for the implementation of concrete activities, which aim to improve management effectiveness, test pilot schemes or develop tools that can be useful to other MPAs.

The MedPAN association launches a Call for Small Projects for Mediterranean MPAs for the 2024-2025 period.

This call aims to **strengthen the level of effective protection in Mediterranean MPAs, with enhanced protection (fully or highly protected areas).**

This Call for Small Projects is open to:

- Organisations that are in charge of the management of a Mediterranean MPA,
- Other organisations (NGOs, private companies, scientific institutions, etc.) working with authorities that are responsible for the management of Mediterranean MPAs.

This Call for Small Projects is funded by the [Pew Bertarelli Ocean Legacy Programme](#).



1. CONTEXT

MPAs come in a variety of status which are diverse in objectives, management approaches, levels of protection and regulations of activities. The MPAs levels of protection¹ vary schematically from:

- Fully protected: all human activities including visitation may be prohibited, except as needed for scientific monitoring.
- Highly protected: allow limited low impact, small scale, highly selective extractive activities, strongly regulated and enforced provided the available resources are sufficient.
- Lightly protected: extractive activities allowed with varying restrictions.
- Minimally protected: despite some legal restrictions, these are not wide or stringent enough to counter significant impacts from human activities.

Scientific research shows evidence that effective higher protection increases biomass, the size and density of organisms and the richness or diversity of species, the reproductive potential of commercially exploited species; it helps also restore benthic communities, facilitates the restoration of lost trophic interactions; and may provide resilience, both to climate change and to invasive alien species.

Only 4.11% of the Mediterranean is effectively protected (MAPAMED; SPA/RAC & MedPAN, 2019). No-Take Zones currently represent only 0.04% of the Mediterranean, a figure that has remained unchanged since the last analysis in 2016 despite an increase in MPA coverage from 6.81% to 8.33%. Sixteen Mediterranean MPAs are entirely no-go, no-take or no-fishing MPAs (MedPAN, 2021).

In 2016, the Tangier Declaration of the Forum of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean stated the following objective “By 2020, increase the coverage and implementation of no-entry, no-take and no-fishing zones, within either existing or future MPAs, from the current coverage of 0.04% of the Mediterranean Sea to reach at least 2% of no-take zone especially in key functional areas”. Few years later, the Post-2020 Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas Roadmap (MPA Forum 2021), echoes this need and recommends to “increase the number and size of MPAs that include zones with enhanced protection levels (e.g., no-take, no-access, strictly protected), to contribute to the recovery of marine ecosystems, based on scientific data and community engagement” (Recommendation 2.1)”. Enhancing the level of protection of the Mediterranean Sea is supported by the current policy framework.

1. Adapted from the MPA Guide 2021. [The MPA Guide: A Framework to Achieve Global Goals for the Ocean](#)

The MedPAN policy document recently developed calls in its second key message for increasing the level of full and enhanced protection in Mediterranean MPAs. Among its recommendations, this document calls for "increasing the number and size of effectively managed MPAs with enhanced levels of protection towards enhanced and integral levels of protection, in order to achieve regional and international commitments through the national MPA system" and to "promote Mediterranean actions in terms of enhanced protection models at the international level".

The MedFund, the environmental fund dedicated to Mediterranean MPAs has recently launched a new initiative to support fully and highly protected areas through a dedicated "guichet". The new MedPAN call for small projects is complementary to this initiative.

To date, the establishment of marine protected areas is far from meeting the ecological challenges, existing threats and pressures such as those induced by climate change, nor the political ambition expressed in the various current Mediterranean, European and international policy frameworks. To support marine conservation efforts and the creation of a representative, effective and resilient network of MPAs, levels of protection should be increased and more evenly distributed across the Mediterranean ecoregions.

Since 2019, MedPAN and its Fisheries Working Group have been working on a no-take zones strategy following an exchange visit organised in Banyuls, France, in April 2019 on designing and enforcing highly effective no-take zones. The objective of this exchange visit was to outline a MedPAN strategy to support MPAs and local fishing communities in the creation and extension of well enforced effective no-take zone.

During this exchange visit, participants identified key recommendations for each step in the process of establishing no-take zones (see Figure below for more details).

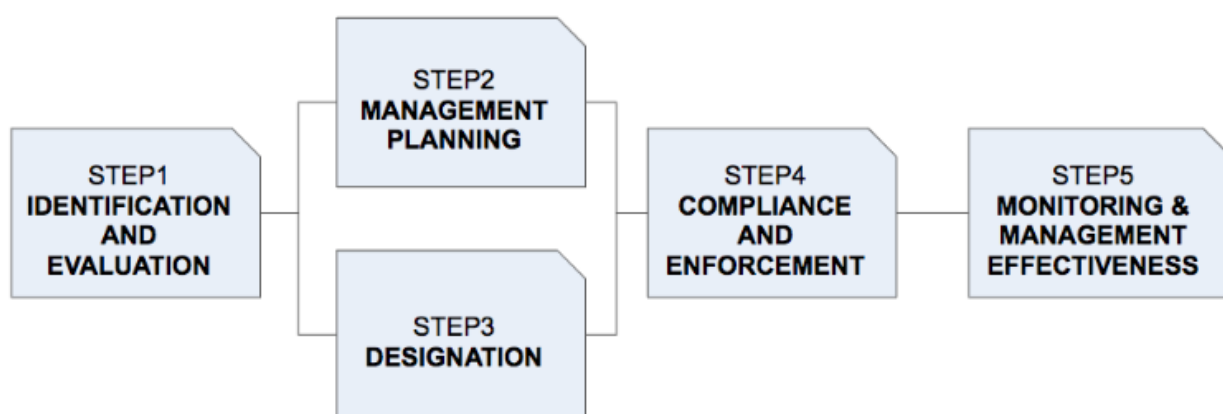


Figure showing the iterative step-by-step process of MedPAN's strategy for the implementation of a successful no-take zone.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL FOR SMALL PROJECTS

By supporting small projects implemented in MPAs, MedPAN pursues the following objectives:

- Enable the identification and designation of enhanced protection areas (fully or highly protected) within existing MPAs or MPAs under creation.
- Strengthen the level of protection in some existing MPAs with highly / fully protected areas (see definitions above).
- Provide expertise and/or means to strengthen the level of effective protection of Mediterranean MPAs, with enhanced protection (highly / fully protected areas).

3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA


3.1 Eligible MPA

The project must concern an official designated MPA or an MPA in the formal process of being designated.

The MPAs eligible to the present Call for Small Projects are: MPA with a national or international statute and Marine Natura 2000 sites.

3.2 Eligible countries

The funding will be awarded to:

- Countries of the European Union: Spain, France, Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Greece, Cyprus and Malta;
 - Countries outside the European Union: Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, the Palestinian Territories, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Monaco, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Albania.
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3.3 Eligible applicants

Eligible applicants should fall within one of the following two categories:

1. Legal authority in charge of the management of one or several MPAs:

- The applicant must be, or become a member of the MedPAN organisation before the implementation of the project.
- According to the Internal Rules of the MedPAN organisation, the admission of new members must be validated by MedPAN's Board of Directors. The application for membership must be submitted at the same time as the grant application and sent to the MedPAN Secretariat. The application form is available on the MedPAN website.
- The candidate must include in his application legal proofs in the case of MPA(s) under formal designation processes.

2. Organisation collaborating with Mediterranean MPA(s) OR contributing to the management of Mediterranean MPA(s):

Case 1: The applicant is already an official partner of MedPAN

- The candidate must be a partner of the MedPAN Association at the time of the launch of the Call for Small Projects.
- The candidate must include in his application:
 - A proof of acceptance of this project (e.g. letter, agreement, MoU, etc.) from the authority in charge of managing or creating the MPA with his application form. If the project concerns several MPAs, the applicant must provide a letter of support from each authority in charge of managing or creating the MPAs concerned. If the proof is in its original language, a translation in English or French must be provided.
 - Legal proofs in the case of MPA(s) under formal designation processes.

Case 2: The applicant is not an official MedPAN partner

- The applicant can be any organisation (NGO, private company, scientific institution, etc.) whose main actions contribute to the management of one or more Mediterranean MPAs.
- The applicant shall provide elements that ensure full collaboration and transparent communication with the authority in charge of managing or creating the relevant MPA(s) throughout the project to ensure successful implementation of the project.
- The applicant must have a legal status that allows him/her to receive grants.

- **The candidate must include in his application:**

- A proof of acceptance of this project (e.g. letter, agreement, MoU, etc.) from the authority in charge of managing or creating the MPA with his application form. If the project concerns several MPAs, the applicant must provide a letter of support from each authority in charge of managing or creating the MPAs concerned. If the proof is in its original language, a translation in English or French must be provided.
- Proof of the legal status of the organisation.
- A document detailing the missions and objectives of the organisation.
- Legal proofs in the case of MPA(s) under formal designation processes.

Project leaders, currently supported by the 1st MedPAN Call for Small Projects launched in 2022 on enhanced protection, are not eligible for this 2nd Call for Small Projects on enhanced protection.

Project leaders and partners who have been involved in unsuccessful or unfinished MedPAN small projects in the past could be considered, by the MedPAN Board, as non-eligible for this 2023 Call for Small Projects.

Members of the MedPAN Board of Directors and Advisory Committee are not eligible as beneficiaries and cannot be hired as consultants in small projects proposals.



3.4 Eligible activities

The table below lists, in a non-exhaustive way, a number of activities that are eligible for this MedPAN Call for Small Projects. These activities have been classified according to the steps for implementing areas with enhanced protection levels.

STEPS	MAIN ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES (not exhaustive)
Identification and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting studies prior to the identification of enhanced protection areas (highly / fully protected) within existing MPAs or MPAs under creation, or to the extension of existing enhanced protection areas. These studies concerned areas with a minimum legal basis and potential for the application of enhanced protection measures. • Conducting studies to improve connectivity between enhanced protection areas (highly / fully protected). • Implementing processes of consultation and involvement of local stakeholders to strengthen the level of protection. • Developing communication tools aimed at informing and engaging institutional stakeholders, users, socio-economic actors of the territory and local communities on the project of enhanced protection. • Organising exchanges of experience with other MPAs that have already experimented the implementation of enhanced protection level (meetings between MPA managers, meetings between fishers, between elected representatives, between administrations and other stakeholders in the area, etc.). • Developing partnerships with fishers, fishers' organisations and other relevant local socio-economic actors to engage them on the project of stronger/enhanced protection. • Organising communication/awareness-raising campaigns on the value of stronger/enhanced protection for professional and recreational fishers, socio-economic stakeholders, boaters, general public, etc. • Etc.

ETAPES	ACTIVITES PRINCIPALES ÉLIGIBLES (non exhaustif)
Management planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing or revising the management plan of one or more MPAs to strengthen the level of protection (towards highly / fully protected areas). • Developing communication tools translating the management plan into a simple language to share the overall vision and management measures with the different stakeholders. • Developing replicable tools to assist in the management of enhanced protection areas in MPAs. • Organising training for MPA staff to enable effective implementation of the enhanced protection level. • Consulting, involving fishers in the management of enhanced protection areas (management committee, monitoring, surveillance...), in the development of management plans for fisheries resources and the regulation of enhanced protection areas (no-fishing zones, periodic closure of sensitive sectors, minimum catch size, elimination of destructive techniques, support for the acquisition of highly selective gear, monitoring of the effects of enhanced protection on commercial fish stocks...). • Organising exchange visits with one or more MPAs with experience in terms of management planning of a enhanced protection area (meetings between MPA managers, but also meetings between fishers, between elected representatives, between administrations and other stakeholders in the area...). • Etc.
Designation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producing legal analyses of the legislative system in place to identify the obstacles and levers to the designation of a enhanced protection area in one or more MPAs. • Implementing communication activities and developing awareness-raising and advocacy tools to engage the authorities in the process (official designation of a new area, regulatory adaptation, etc.). • Etc.



ETAPES	ACTIVITES PRINCIPALES ÉLIGIBLES (non exhaustif)
Compliance and enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness raising and training of the judicial sector in the control and management of enhanced protection areas. • Organising meetings / exchange visits with prosecutors, police and control authorities to be engaged. • Purchasing equipment to support the surveillance of the enhanced protection areas. • Involving artisanal fishers and other users in the surveillance activities of the enhanced protection areas. • Producing communication tools for users on regulations. • Installing signs at sea indicating the enhanced protection areas (highly / fully protected). • Installing signs at sea indicating the different use zones (swimming, anchoring, diving, fishing, reinforced protection zone, etc.). • Implementing access-licensing schemes to the enhanced protection areas for tourist operators and tour guides. • Implementing licences for recreational fishing in the enhanced protection areas. • Developing alternative livelihoods and/or income-generating activities for fishers (pescatourism, diversity of fishing techniques, etc.) to compensate for the restrictions on use in the enhanced protection areas. • Strengthening coordination between authorities, administrations and local stakeholders (joint patrols, exchange of information, etc.) for enhanced protection areas. • Etc.
Monitoring and management effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organising training for MPA staff to enable long-term monitoring of indicators of the effects and effectiveness of enhanced protection (ecological and socio-economic benefits). • Implementing long-term monitoring of the effects and effectiveness of enhanced protection (indicators and methodology for measuring ecological and socio-economic benefits) to enable adaptive management. • Developing systems for voluntary declaration of fishing catches by professional and recreational fishers. • Etc.



4. TYPES OF PROJECTS FUNDED

The project must target one or more steps in the implementation of enhanced protection (fully or highly protected areas):

1. Identification and evaluation,
2. Management planning,
3. Designation,
4. Compliance and enforcement,
5. Monitoring and management effectiveness.

Projects must include as many concrete actions as possible. **Studies should not be the only activities of the project** and should be limited and lead to management actions within the project.

Publications and research data funded by the MedPAN Small Projects Call must be **open access**.

Expert missions from one MPA to another, **exchange of experience** or training will also be taken into account if the immediate implementation of the acquired knowledge is planned during the project's lifetime. The **replication** or adaptation of successful experiences (including from previous projects) in other MPAs is encouraged.

Projects on enhanced protection involving **at least 3 MPAs in the same country** (to better support national efforts, pool efforts at national level, develop common approaches and tools, better mobilise national expertise) are encouraged.

Projects on enhanced protection involving **at least 3 MPAs from 3 different countries** (to work on a common subject, transfer experience or develop a common tool, etc.) and whose results can benefit the Mediterranean MPA network are also encouraged.

It should be noted that MPAs in the Mediterranean are at various stages of development (creation, operationalisation, autonomous functioning), so some activities are more or less relevant, effective and coherent according to this level of development. The proposed projects must demonstrate the **added value** they bring, regardless of the level of development of the MPA concerned.

Each applicant organisation may submit only one application as the responsible project coordinator. Nevertheless, this applicant may be involved in other projects as a partner, provided that it is assured of its capacity to carry out all the activities.

If you would like to propose a project involving several MPAs and are looking for managers to collaborate, you can contact the MedPAN Secretariat (contact@medpan.org).

5. DURATION AND START OF THE PROJECT

The duration of the projects will be of **12 to 15 months maximum**.

The projects are scheduled to start in May-June 2024 and should be completed maximum by the end of September 2025.

6. FUNDING TERMS

6.1 Funding amount

The contribution of the MedPAN association for each project will depend on the type of funding requested by the applicant:

- **Category I - Classic:** the MedPAN contribution to the project will be a **maximum of €25,000**. It concerns any type of project involving **a single MPA or several MPAs in the same country**.
- **Catégorie II -Cooperation:** The MedPAN contribution to the project will be a maximum of €45,000. The project involves at least **3 MPAs from 3 different Mediterranean countries** to work on a common subject, transfer experience or develop a common tool.

For this 2nd Call for Small Projects, the available financial envelope should enable to fund 3 to 4 small projects, depending on the amounts requested to MedPAN.

6.2. Co-financing rules

It is required to have matching funds to MedPAN's financial contribution.

These matching funds can be either a contribution from the applicant or a co-financing from local or international financial partners.

The financial contribution of MedPAN to the project budget shall not exceed 75% of the project's total amount.

6.3 Payments

The funding for each project will be paid in 3 instalments.

For information only:

- 40% funding upon signature of the Agreement,
- 30% after the submission and validation of the interim technical and financial report (mid-term),
- 30% of the balance after the submission and validation of the final technical and financial report.

7. APPLICATION FORMS

7.1 Grant application

There are two main stages:

- **First step (concerns all the applicants)**

All organisations wishing to apply for a grant under this Call must **first complete the Grant Application Form (GAF)** and submit all the required supporting documents.

The form allows you to present the project in a synthetic way.

Only complete forms will be included in the evaluation. Take the utmost care in writing the GAF to provide concise and clear information. **The GAF must be sent before January 26, 2024 6 pm at the latest.**

- **Second step (for pre-selected projects)**

The **candidates of the pre-selected projects will have to complete a Full Application File (FAF)** to present the project in details. The deadline for submission will be communicated to pre-selected applicants.

7.2. Applications procedures

The grant application form to be completed can be downloaded on the [dedicated page here](#)

Only grant application forms completed in strict accordance with the template will be considered.

The form must be **submitted in English or in French**. All annexes listed in the rules and in the application form must be provided. Applicants are requested **not to** send paper grant applications to MedPAN.

Deadline

The Grant Application Form (GAF) and attachments must be submitted online by January 21, 2024 (midnight, Paris time) last deadline.

You will receive a message confirming receipt of your grant application form. Only applications received within the deadlines indicated above will be accepted. For any questions, please contact projet@medpan.org.

8. SELECTION PROCESS

The selection of projects will done in four steps:

	Phase 1: Eligibility	Phase 2: Pre-selection	Phase 3: FAF development	Phase 4: Final selection
Who	MedPAN Secretariat	MedPAN Secretariat, and external support if necessary, with the advice of the MedPAN Advisory Committee (AC) and Scientific Committee (SC) if necessary. Final decision of the MedPAN Board of Directors (BoD)	Preselected candidates with the support of an external consultant if necessary	MedPAN Board of Directors (BoD)
What	First evaluation of Grant Application Forms (GAF) on the basis of eligibility criteria	Evaluation of eligible GAF on the basis of a scoring grid. Candidates may be asked for clarification. Pre-selected projects may be submitted to the AC and the SC for advice	Preselected candidates develop their Full Application File (FAF)	Final selection of projects
Results	Sorting of projects according to eligibility criteria	Rating of all projects and pre-selection of projects. The pre-selected projects are validated by the Board of Directors. All applicants are informed of the results by email.	The complete FAFs are sent to the MedPAN Secretariat	Final selection of projects. Candidates are informed of the results by email.

Note: If your Grant Application Form (GAF) is pre-selected, the MedPAN Secretariat will ask you to prepare a Full Application File (FAF) in February/March 2024.

MedPAN will send a response to each non-preselected applicant to inform them of the results of the Call for Projects.

8.1 Eligibility check

The eligibility criteria are verified as follows:

- Eligibility of the candidate according to the conditions set in 3.1 Eligible MPA, 3.2 Eligible countries and 3.3 Eligible applicants.
- Compliance with the eligible activities (see 3.4 Eligible activities).
- Compliance with the duration and start (see 5. Duration and start of the projects).
- Compliance with budget including co-financing conditions (see 6. Funding terms).

8.2 Project evaluation

Pre-selection

Following the eligibility criteria, projects will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- **Project relevance:** Project justification (the project meets the objectives of the CSP, the project addresses a problem that is related to MPA management issues) demonstrating its "added value" for the MPA
- **Expected results of the project:** the project will help to achieve the expected results according to the schedule and resources allocated, the potential for sustainability of the results will be demonstrated.
- **Coherence of planned activities:** activities are well calibrated and prioritized, they respond to the management challenges of the MPA.

A bonus will be awarded to projects demonstrating an added value for the network of MPAs.

The pre-selection will also take into account the following general criteria:

- Diversity of activities and sites.
- Innovative projects, projects of interest to the MedPAN network..

Final selection

Projects will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Relevance of the project
- Internal consistency of the project
- Organisational and institutional framework for the successful implementation of the project
- Methodology for the implementation of activities
- Potential for sustainability of project actions
- Estimated budget
- Concrete management actions

9. IMPLEMENTATION OF SMALL PROJECTS

MedPAN organisation is responsible for the implementation of the Call for Small Projects.

Beneficiaries will sign a Financing Agreement with the MedPAN organisation. Even if several partners are involved in the project, only one beneficiary will sign the Financing Agreement and receive the project funds.

All projects will be subject to a systematic interim and final evaluation. The MedPAN Secretariat will help project beneficiaries with their self-assessment and reports preparation. It will also provide a template for interim and final technical and financial reports. Reports and deliverables are validated by the MedPAN Board of Directors.

The MedPAN Secretariat will directly monitor the project progress and may call on the support of local or thematic consultants (or network members) if necessary, depending on the project's situation during the monitoring phase.

Project beneficiaries will receive a manual of procedures as an appendix to the financial agreement.

MedPAN can cancel the Financing Agreement of a project if the project is not launched timely (within 2 months) after signature, in which case MedPAN can reallocate the funds to another project. In this case, the beneficiary is required to reimburse the full first instalment to MedPAN.

If a key activity or deliverable is not validated by the MedPAN of Directors during the interim or final evaluation, the project could be considered as unsuccessful. In this case, the beneficiary may have to reimburse all or part of the funds to MedPAN, depending on the situation.

If the project is unfinished, the beneficiary may have to reimburse all or part of the funds to MedPAN, depending on the situation.

10. RESOURCES

Future applicants can consult the following resources related to the establishment of fully/highly protected areas:

- [Report Exchange visit on no-take zones \(24-26 April 2019, France\)](#) of the MedPAN working group on fisheries and [presentation of the no take zone strategy](#).
- Special edition of the MedPAN e-newsletter on [The efficiency of full protection in MPAs](#)
- [MedPAN's Policy Paper](#)
- [MedPAN communication toolkit](#): A customisable presentation for full protection in MPAs
- Series of [animated videos](#) on the role of MPAs in the Mediterranean



Since 2011, MedPAN has been contributing to the development of concrete actions for the protection of the marine environment and the sustainable development of activities in Mediterranean MPAs. The best practices and tools developed by the small projects strengthen the management of these areas and consolidate the network of managers.

Visit the [small projects page](https://medpan.org)

<https://medpan.org>



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