

I. ISRAEL

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This country report provides a comprehensive overview and assessment of the current state-of-play with regard to Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) in Israel¹. After detailing Israel's country characteristics, its most important maritime activities are presented. Next, the country report discusses the legal aspects, key players, plans and projects related to Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and MSP as well as the cross-border initiatives and existing platforms for cooperation. To conclude, the main findings related to Maritime Spatial Planning are summed up. The sources of information used and persons contacted are listed at the end.

I.1. COUNTRY CHARACTERISTICS

Israel is a country in Western Asia located on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. At the sea side, Israel borders Lebanon in the north, and Palestinian territories (Gaza Strip) and Egypt in the south-west. A summary of Israel's most important country characteristics is presented in *Table 1*.

Israel did not establish an Exclusive Economic Zone. Consequently, its jurisdiction is restricted to the Israeli territorial waters.

¹ For the purpose of this study 20 country reports have been drawn up in total. Relevant available information on Monaco is included in the case study of the Western Mediterranean and information on the United Kingdom (Gibraltar) is included in the case study of the Alboran Sea.

Table 1: Country characteristics – Israel

<u>Israel</u>		
<i>Coastal regions (districts)</i>	Tsafon, Haifa, Merkaz, Tel Aviv and Darom	
<i>Coastline length (on the Mediterranean)*</i>	190 km	
<i>Water depth</i>	Up to 2 200 m	
<i>Maritime zones**</i>	Breadth	Area (km²)
Territorial sea	12 nm	4 124

* Source: MedPAN, www.medpan.org

** Based on the national acts or decrees of the maritime zones; EarthTrends, Coastal and Marine Ecosystems – searchable database

Source: Policy Research Corporation

I.2. MARITIME ACTIVITIES AND THE PROTECTION OF MARINE AREAS

Israel's main maritime activity concerns *maritime transport*. Israel has three large ports and seven marinas along its coast. As the eastern Mediterranean is relatively poor in nutrients, *fishing activities* are rather limited (3 400 tonnes in 2008²). Israel currently has three coastal fish farms and one cage farm; *mariculture* is believed to increase³. According to FAO, the production was approximately 21 000 tonnes in 2008⁴.

Sea water desalination is an activity which is very well-advanced in Israel. Currently three plants are active. Three other plants are in the tender phase. With regard to *oil and gas*, two natural gas fields off the Israeli shore have been found. These fields will become the major suppliers of energy to Israel. Moreover, Israel is preparing for import of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), which will require appropriate infrastructure in the future. Provided that the winds near the Israeli shore are not sufficiently strong, no *offshore wind farms* are currently active and no offshore wind farms are expected to become active in the future⁵.

According to the Network of Managers of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean (MedPAN)⁶, Israel has established five Marine Protected Areas. *Table 2* details the marine and terrestrial area, their legal status and international recognition. All Marine Protected Areas are located in the Israeli territorial sea.

² FAO, *Yearbook of fishery statistics*.

³ Division of International Relations within the Ministry of Environmental Protection, e-mail February 2, 2010; Bresler, G., 2007, *The state of Marine Spatial Planning in Israel*.

⁴ FAO, *Yearbook of fishery statistics*.

⁵ Division of International Relations within the Ministry of Environmental Protection, e-mail February 2, 2010; Bresler, G., 2007, *The state of Marine Spatial Planning in Israel*.

⁶ The Network of Managers of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean.

Table 2: Marine Protected Areas – Israel

<i>Name</i>	<i>Marine surface (km²)</i>	<i>Terrestrial surface (km²)</i>	<i>Legal status</i>	<i>International recognition</i>
<i>Rosh Hanikra</i>	9.6	0.0	Nature Reserve	n/a
<i>Yam Dor Habonim</i>	5.3	0.4	Marine Nature Reserve	n/a
<i>Yam Evtah</i>	1.4	0.0	Marine Nature Reserve	n/a
<i>Yam Gador</i>	0.7	0.7	Marine Nature Reserve	n/a
<i>Shigma</i>	1.0	0.0	Nature Reserve	n/a

Source: Policy Research Corporation based on the Network for Managers of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean

Intense competition between the following uses is likely to occur in case sea-use does not become regulated⁷:

- Between intensive marine uses in Haifa bay: large port development, marine nature reserves, channel dredging, recreation zones, military closed area;
- Between open sea fishing and deep sea nature reserves;
- Between big projects of sea water desalination and recreation use;
- Between the need to avoid coast cliffs erosion (with detached breakwaters) and preserving natural features of the sea and submarine antiquities;
- Between the need of sand supply especially for port construction and the need to protect the sea environment as a whole and the sand drift phenomena in particular.

⁷ Bresler, G., 2007, *The state of Marine Spatial Planning in Israel*.

I.3. LEGAL ASPECTS AND KEY PLAYERS⁸

The legislation which should be taken into account is the following⁹:

- ***Planning and Building Law*** (1965);
- ***Territorial Waters Policy Document*** (1999):
 - o In 1997, the Territorial Waters Committee initiated an ICZM approach in a policy document which was completed in 1999; the Territorial Waters Policy Document is founded on the principles of ICZM and aims to create an effective tool for management and planning of territorial waters;
- ***Protection of the Coastal Environment Law*** (2004): covers the territorial waters and the land side up to 300 meters inland from the coastline and aims at:
 - o Protecting the coastal environment and its natural and heritage assets; restoring and preserving them as a resource of unique value and preventing and reducing any damage to them;
 - o Preserving the coastal environment and the coastal sand for the benefit of the public, for present and future generations;
 - o Establishing principles and limitations for the sustainable management, development and use of the coastal environment;
- ***National Master Plan for the Mediterranean Coast (1983)***: relates only to the terrestrial part of the coast, but certainly influences the use and development in the nearby waters; aims to prevent development for which a coastal location is not essential and to resolve competition between uses which require coastal locations.

Key players:

- Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Maritime Spatial Planning generally use the land-use planning system established under the Planning and Building Law of 1965; it is a national affair under the ***Ministry of the Environmental Protection, Spatial Planning and Construction***;
- Land-use master plans and policy documents on ICZM were prepared by the ***Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Spatial Planning and Construction*** in response to growing development pressures and competition along the coastline;
- The ***Committee for the Protection of the Coastal Environment*** is responsible for decisions on coastal development plans:
 - o Established in 2004 under the Protection of the Coastal Environment Law as the successor of the ***Territorial Waters Committee*** which was established in 1965 (Act for marine planning in territorial waters);
 - Until 2004, the Planning and Building Law conferred exclusive rights to the Territorial Waters Committee to prepare, approve or postpone any plans connected with the coast and the Israeli territorial waters;

⁸ Division of International Relations within the Ministry of Environmental Protection, e-mail February 2, 2010; Environmental Policy Centre, e-mail January 28, 2010.

⁹ Division of International Relations within the Ministry of Environmental Protection, e-mail February 2, 2010; Bresler, G., 2007, *The state of Marine Spatial Planning in Israel*.

- A national master plan for the Mediterranean marine and coastal area was prepared in the late 80's by the Environmental Protection Service within the Ministry of Interior and became – although not statutorily approved – a policy document for the (former) committee;
 - A marine spatial plan was prepared by the (former) committee in 2000 as a non-statutory guidance document;
 - Consists of representatives of the Ministries of the Interior, Environmental Protection, Transport, Defence, National Infrastructure, Tourism, Construction and Housing, Agriculture and Rural Development and other representatives (local or experts); the professional committee is mandated to review every plan falling within the coastal environment according to criteria which are defined in the law and express its objectives;
 - Responsible for coordinating the planning in the sea area; the following marine uses are not subject to the Protection of the Coastal Environment Law and consequently are not within the competences of the Committee for the Protection of the Coastal Environment:
 - Shipping activities such as defining anchorage spots and sea ways (carried out according to the Ports Ordinance 1971 under the responsibility of the Ministry of Transport);
 - Defining fish fields (planned by the Fishing Department within the Ministry of Agriculture according to the Fisheries Ordinance);
 - Drilling and extraction of oil and natural gas (done under regulations according to the Petroleum Law, 1952 regulated by the Ministry of National Infrastructure);
 - Closing areas for military reasons (within the competences of the Ministry of Defence).
- NGOs:
- The Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI);
 - The Israel Union for Environmental Defence (IUED).

I.4. NATIONAL AND SUB-NATIONAL PLANS, PROJECTS AND STUDIES RELATED TO ICZM AND MSP

The *Coastal Area Management Programme (CAMP) for Israel* started in 1996 and was mainly focused on analysing the current pressures on the coastal environment. Consequently, a number of policies and relevant tools were proposed. The majority of its main recommendations concerned the territorial waters and the (former) Territorial Waters Committee. *Table 3* lists the main recommendations resulting from the CAMP Israel.

Table 3: Coastal Area Management Programme – Israel

Area covered:	Entire national coastline
Main recommendations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare a master plan for the territorial waters• The power of the Territorial Waters Committee should be extended and broadened to include the 100m area in which construction is prohibited• All marine and coastal plans should be subject to EIA requirements• The Territorial Waters Committee should be entrusted with further inspection capabilities• An updated and reliable database on territorial water management should be established• Conflicts of land-use should be resolved by the use of the consensus building approach• Change the legislation and implement the Law for the Protection of the Coastal Environment
Project funding:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding provided by UNEP-MAP
Timeframe:	1996 – 2000

Source: Policy Research Corporation based on PAP/RAC, 2000, *CAMP for Israel: Coastal Zone Management in Israel*

Israel's ICZM policy is largely integrated in its Protection of the Coastal Environment Law. Moreover, the Territorial Waters Policy Document is founded on the principles of ICZM and aims to create an effective tool for management and planning of territorial waters.

Furthermore, as indicated above, Israel has a number of tools suitable for the planning of the marine area. It should be noted that concerning the planning of the Israeli marine area, progress was made. However, planning is still carried out through a sectoral approach far behind the comprehensive planning in terrestrial areas. The most practical way to regulate sea-uses and minimise competition between these uses would be to prepare a National Master Plan for the territorial sea or / and Master Plans for specific areas¹⁰. The benefits of such a solution would be:

- Extending a system that has proved its worth with regard to terrestrial planning towards the sea area;
- Nearly all stakeholders that have an interest in the sea are represented in the Committee for the Protection of the Coastal Environment; consequently, they can easily provide input for the planning process;
- The Environmental Impact Study – which is an essential tool for any planning in this area – is part of the Planning and Building Law.

To conclude, Israel signed the Barcelona Convention's ICZM Protocol in 2008.

¹⁰ Bresler, G., 2007, *The state of Marine Spatial Planning in Israel*.

I.5. INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES RELATED TO ICZM AND MSP

International initiatives (including EU-funded projects) related to ICZM and MSP in the Mediterranean Sea basin are presented in *Annex II* of the final report.

Israel is / was involved in:

- The *SAFEMED* project (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey).

I.6. MAIN FINDINGS RELEVANT FOR MARITIME SPATIAL PLANNING

The main findings with respect to the potential for the application of Maritime Spatial Planning in Israel are:

Maritime activities:

- Intense competition is likely to occur between a number of uses in case sea-use does not become regulated¹¹.

Legal aspects and key players:

- ICZM and MSP generally use the land-use planning system established under the Planning and Building Law of 1965;
- The Protection of the Coastal Environment Law resulted in the establishment of the Committee for the Protection of the Coastal Environment which is responsible for the coordination of planning in the sea area;
- Territorial waters are taken into account by the legislation.

Current status of Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Maritime Spatial Planning:

- A Coastal Area Management Programme for Israel was started in 1996; its main recommendations concerned the territorial waters and the former Territorial Waters Committee;
- ICZM policy is integrated in the Protection of the Coastal Environment Law; Territorial Waters Policy Document is founded on the principles of ICZM and aims to create an effective tool for management and planning of territorial waters;
- Israel signed the ICZM Protocol in 2008;
- At present planning of maritime activities is carried out in a sectoral way; the most practical way to regulate sea-uses and minimise competition between these uses is to prepare a National Master Plan for the territorial sea or / and Master Plans for specific areas¹²;
- Less potential for the application of MSP at the international level due to Israel's location and relationship with neighbouring countries and national state-of-play with regard to implementation MSP.

¹¹ Bresler, G., 2007, *The state of Marine Spatial Planning in Israel*.

¹² Bresler, G., 2007, *The state of Marine Spatial Planning in Israel*.

I.7. OVERVIEW OF SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED AND PERSONS CONTACTED

Sources of information used:

- Bresler, G., 2007, *The state of Marine Spatial Planning in Israel*;
- EarthTrends, Coastal and Marine Ecosystems – searchable database;
- FAO, *Yearbook of fishery statistics*;
- PAP/RAC, 2000, *CAMP for Israel: Coastal Zone Management in Israel*;
- PAP/RAC, The Coastal Management Centre, www.pap-thecoastcentre.org;
- PAP/RAC, the Mediterranean ICAM Clearing House, www.pap-medclearinghouse.org/eng/about_ch.asp;
- The Network of Managers of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean, www.medpan.org.

Persons contacted:

- Mr. Adam Schalimtzek, Foreign Relations Coordinator – Division of International Relations within the Ministry of Environmental Protection;
- Ms. Valerie Brachya, Director of the Environmental Policy Centre.

Israeli authorities have provided feedback on a draft version of the country report.