I. MOROCCO

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This document has not been adopted by the European Commission and should therefore not be relied upon as a statement of the European Commission. The purpose of this document is merely to provide a comprehensive overview based on available information without claiming to be exhaustive. Although stakeholder consultation has taken place to verify the collected information, it is possible that this document does not reflect the view of all stakeholders involved. This document has been updated until February 2011.

This country report provides a comprehensive overview and assessment of the current state-of-play with regard to Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) in Morocco\(^1\). After detailing Morocco’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 relevant international initiatives and 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. Please note that Morocco forms part of one of the four marine areas which will be studied in further detail.

I.1. COUNTRY CHARACTERISTICS

Morocco is located in North Africa. In the Mediterranean Sea basin, the country borders Algeria in the east and shares the Alboran Sea with Spain. As of 1997, Morocco is divided into 16 regions; three of them border the Mediterranean Sea basin, namely Tangier-Tétouan, Taza-Al Hociema-Taounate and Oriental.

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\(^1\) 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.
Morocco’s Mediterranean coastline measures about 512 km. The State established an Exclusive Economic Zone, but the EEZ is not enforced in the Mediterranean Sea basin. Table 1 shows Morocco’s coastal characteristics and the Moroccan country characteristics.

Table 1: Country characteristics – Morocco

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Morocco</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mediterranean coastal regions</td>
<td>Tangier-Tétouan, Taza-Al Hoceima-Taounate, Oriental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediterranean coastline length*</td>
<td>512 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water depth</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maritime zones**</td>
<td>Breadth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territorial sea</td>
<td>12 nm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contiguous zone***</td>
<td>24 nm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


** Based on the national acts or decrees of the maritime zones; Morocco also established a 200 nm EEZ, but does not enforce this zone in the Mediterranean Sea

*** Source: CIA, The World Factbook

Source: Policy Research Corporation

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

Along the Mediterranean coastline, Morocco borders the Alboran Sea. The Alboran Sea is characterised by a high marine biodiversity (e.g. sea grass, cetaceans and sea turtles). Human activities that currently put pressure on the Alboran Sea are: maritime transport, land-based water discharges, tourism, overfishing and sand extractions:

− Along the Moroccan Mediterranean coastline, the ports of Al Hoceima and Nador2 serve many local fishing vessels and recreational boats, as well as daily ferries;

− The port of Tanger – originally mainly a tourist hub – can accommodate container ships in the Tangier-Mediterranée port; Tanger-Med is considered to be the largest Mediterranean port on the African continent and went into service in July 2007. The original port of Tanger will be dedicated to recreational and cruise shipping in the near future, while ro-ro and ferry activities is programmed to be transferred to the new built ro-ro and passenger terminal at the port of Tanger-Med, an industrial and logistics port integrated into the global trade network. With a capacity of 3 million containers, the port is designed to accommodate the latest generation of container vessels. Total capacity will be brought to 8 million containers by 2016 when the Tanger Med II extension project will go into service;

− The fisheries sector is an important sector in the Moroccan economy, representing some 2.5% of GDP and accounting for around 15% of total exports; in the framework of the Common Fisheries

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2 Other Moroccan fishing ports along the Mediterranean coastline include Tanger, Ras Kebdan, Jebha and M‘Diq.
Policy, the EU signed a fishery agreement with Morocco; the current agreement was signed for the period 2007 – 2011\(^3\).

In Morocco, *Le Haut Commissariat aux Eaux et Forêts et à la Lutte Contre la Désertification*, is charged with the management of protected areas for the entire country. In 1996, this department approved a *Master Plan for protected areas* which identified about forty coastal areas as sites of biological and ecological interest. Twelve areas are located along the Mediterranean coastline of Morocco out of which:

− One site, Al Hociema, has received the status of Specially Protected Area of Mediterranean Interest (SPAMI);
− Two sites (the Nador Lagoon and the Estuary of the Moulouya river) have received the status of Ramsar site\(^4\);
− Five sites have been selected for the project MedWetCoast\(^5\).

*Figure 1* illustrates their location.

*Figure 1:  Marine Protected Areas – Morocco*


### I.3. LEGAL ASPECTS AND KEY PLAYERS\(^6\)

There are different laws in the framework of environmental legislation most relevant laws are:

− Law on the Protection and Valorisation of the Environment (no. 11-03);
− Law on the Planning, Protection, Valorisation and Conservation of the Littoral (no. 31-06)

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\(^3\) This fisheries agreement allows EU vessels from 11 Member States to fish in Moroccan waters, see http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/external_relations/bilateral_agreements/morocco_en.htm.

\(^4\) Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention.

\(^5\) See *Annex II* of the final report as well as section I.4.


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Draft charter on Protection of the Environment and Sustainable Development.

The Kingdom has recently strengthened its legal arsenal of laws by serving directly and indirectly in the management of coastal areas including:

- The municipal charter and its provisions on ICZM;
- Laws Code forming marine fisheries and conservation of marine ecosystems;
- Legislation on national parks and protected areas;
- Law 12-03 on impact studies Law 10-95 on water;
- Law 28-00 on waste management and disposal.

In Morocco, multiple actors are involved in the management of the coastal zone. Relevant institutions include:

- Ministère de l’Aménagement du Territoire, de l’Eau et de l’Environnement;
- Ministère de l’Agriculture et de la Pêche Maritime, Direction des Pêches Maritimes;
- Le Haut Commissariat aux Eaux et Forêts et à la Lutte Contre la Désertification;
- Ministère de l’Equipement et des Transports;
- L’Agence de l’Oriental;
- L’Agence pour la Promotion et le Développement du Nord;
- Institut National de la Recherche Halieutique.

In 2009, l’Agence de l’Oriental and l’Institut National de la Recherche Halieutique have signed a convention on the conservation and the development of the eastern coastal area of Morocco.

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

The Ministry of Housing, Urban Development and Spatial Planning has decided to re-examine a study on the Aduit of the Moroccan Coast. This audit will develop a vision or a strategy of sustainable development and management of these areas. It aims to provide a coherent set of instruments adapted to the specificities of Moroccan coastal areas, creating new management arrangements resulting in effective and efficient sustainable management.

The two most important projects in Morocco which are related to ICZM are CAMP Morocco and MedWetCoast. Although MedWetCoast was an international initiative, the project is detailed under this paragraph as it resulted in two sub-national projects aiming to create coastal management plans.

a/ CAMP Morocco
In 2004, the Ministry of Spatial Planning, Water and Environment in cooperation with PAP/RAC conducted a feasibility study to launch a CAMP for the Moroccan Mediterranean coastal zones. The feasibility study resulted in a project proposal to develop a ‘Plan d’Aménagement Côtier’ for the area Rif Central (see Figure 2). This CAMP project, which ended in June 2010, included the development of an ICZM strategy.

**Figure 2: CAMP for Morocco: Rif Central**

The objective of the CAMP in the coastal area of the central Rif is to contribute to the socio-economic development of the local population through the protection and sustainable use of coastal resources; the strategy of CAMP in the coastal area of the central Rif will be based on the concept of ICZM.

*b/ MedWetCoast – Morocco*

MedWetCoast is a project funded by the ‘Global Environmental Facilities’ and ‘Le Fond Français pour l’Environnement Mondial (FFEM)’ and covered the period 1999-2004. The overall objective was to contribute to the preservation and sustainable use of wetland biodiversity in the Mediterranean and achieve and demonstrate this in a set of fifteen important sites. The sites covered six Mediterranean countries, namely Albania, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority and Tunisia. The Moroccan MedWetCoast sites and objectives are presented in Figure 3.

**Figure 3: MedWetCoast – Moroccan sites**

Specific objectives for Moroccan sites:
- Development and implementation of policies for the sustainable management of wetlands and coastal areas
- Protection and removal of root causes of the loss of biodiversity of global significance in key demonstration sites
- Networking and training to raise public awareness and exchange know-how and experience within the regions

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c/ Nador and Moulouya

Two sites which formed part of the MedWetCoast project, namely, the Estuary of the Moulouya River and the Nador Lagoon were the subject of other ICZM related projects in the period 2006-2008 and were funded under the SMAP III programme (Short and Medium Term Priority Environmental Action Programme) of the European Union.

Nador Lagoon

The aim of the project was to create a Coastal Action Plan (CAP) for the Nador Lagoon to efficiently protect the environment as well as to promote the economic and social development in the coastal zone. The main partners involved were EUCC (the European Coastal and Marine Union) and three Moroccan institutes: l'Ecole Nationale Forestière d’Ingénieurs, the Commune Rurale de Boudinar and the Forum of Urbanism, Environment and Development. The Action Plan for the province of Nador was completed in May 2009.

Moulouya River

In partnership with El Kala National Park in Algeria and the Cellule Littoral of the Ministry of Housing, Urban development and Spatial Planning, la Tour du Valat, a research centre for the protection of Mediterranean wetlands, implemented an Integrated Coastal Zone Management project covering coastal areas which include sensitive wetland areas. The project, took place on a 60 km coastal stretch from Annaba city to the Tunisian border in Algeria, and on either side of the Moulouya estuary. Both sites are classified as protected areas. The project aimed to create a ‘Contract of Coastal Space’, a contractual act of economic planning committing local partners as well as the Ministry to conserve these sensitive coastal areas.

d/ Sustainable Climate Change Adaptation in Morocco (ACCMA)

Initiated by the Center for Research and International Development, this project focuses on adaptation to rising sea levels and extreme weather events in the eastern Moroccan Mediterranean coast. Its aim is to improve knowledge and awareness on climate change and build capacity to assess vulnerability to climate change in different socio-economic sectors in Morocco (e.g. the coastal provinces Nador and Berkane).

1.5. INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES RELATED TO ICZM AND MSP

The policy of international cooperation for the benefit of Morocco’s coastal and marine environment constitutes a legal and moral obligation. This cooperation has resulted in the signing or ratification of a number of conventions and international agreements, including related, directly or indirectly, to the management of coastal areas. Several conventions are those related to risks of marine pollution
(prevention of pollution and regulation of damage in case of accident), seven of which are specific to the Mediterranean Sea. Morocco is a contracting party to the Barcelona Convention and is committed to the Action Plan for the Mediterranean. 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.

*Morocco* is/was involved in:

- The *Alboran platform*;
- The following EU-funded projects:
  - The *MedWetCoast* project (Albania, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority and Tunisia);
  - Other EU projects for FP5, FP6 & FP7, such as MAMA, ENCORA, MedPAN, BeachMedE, COLASU, MelMARINA, HERMES and PEGASO.

**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 Morocco are:

*Country characteristics and maritime activities:*

- Morocco established an EEZ of 200 nm (Law no. 1.81.179), but the EEZ is not enforced in the Mediterranean Sea basin;
- Together with Spain and Algeria, Morocco borders the Alboran Sea which is characterised by a high marine biodiversity; human activities that currently put pressure on the Alboran Sea are shipping, land-based pollution, overfishing and sand extractions.

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

- In Morocco, several sub-national projects aiming to develop a coastal management plan at sub-national level have recently been completed; the CAMP ended in June 2010; a national ICZM strategy has not been developed yet;
- Environmental legislation has been revised and updated (legislation has been adopted by Ministries Council, but not yet by the Parliament);
- Morocco has environmental legislation in place, such as the Law on the Protection and Volarisation of the Environment (no. 11-03) that provides for the established of coastal and marine protected areas, but ICZM or MSP legislation is missing;
- Together with Spanish and Algerian representatives, Moroccan stakeholders are involved in the Alboran platform which was developed to discuss the conservation and sustainable development of the Alboran Sea.
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I.7. OVERVIEW OF SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED AND PERSONS CONTACTED

a/ Sources of information used:

- Dakki M., 2004, Programme d’Aménagement Côtier en Méditerranée marocaine;
- EarthTrends, 2003, *Coastal and marine ecosystems – Morocco*;
- IUCN, www.iucn.org;
- Melhaoui M. and El Hafid L., 2008, *De l’approche GICZ à la mise en place du contrat d’espace littoral : cas de la zone littorale Moulouya-Saïda*;
- PAP/RAC, *CAMP Rif Central, Morocco*;
- 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;
- The World Bank, *Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Morocco*;

b/ Persons contacted:

- Mr Bouchta el Moumni, Université Abelmalek Essaadi;
- Mr Driss Nachite, Université Abelmalek Essaadi and director of UFR ‘Sciences de la Mer’;
- Ms Fatiha El Mahdaoui, Map focal point, Secrétariat chargé de l’eau et de l’environnement;
- Mr Fikrat Abdelouahed, Ministère de l’habitat, de l’urbanisme et du développement de l’espace;
- Mr Larbi Sbai, conseiller du secrétaire d’état du département de pêche;
- Ms Maria Snoussi, CAMP-Morocco Project leader, Université Mohamed V Faculté des Sciences;
- Mr M’hamed Idrissi, head of regional centre INRH;
- Mr Said Benchoucha, biologist at INRH;
- Ms Sarra Sefrioui, PhD student in international law (Université Paris XI);
- Mr Taoufiq Boudchiche, Agence de l’Oriental;
Moroccan authorities have provided feedback on a draft version of the country report.