

# ICZM PROTOCOL FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN – A LEGAL FRAME FOR MANAGING COASTAL SYSTEMS

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The Barcelona Convention as the legal framework and its seven specific Protocols complete the legal system for the Mediterranean region. The signing of ICZM Protocol, the 7<sup>th</sup> Protocol in January 2008 in Madrid marked the fulfilment of six years of dedicated work by all the Parties. By adopting the ICZM Protocol, unique in international legislation, the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) demonstrated its will to keep ahead in terms of legal innovation and marine and coastal governance within the regional seas context. The signing also marked therefore the beginning of an intensive process of implementation to ensure that its ambitious objectives for the sustainable development of the Mediterranean coastal zone are achieved. By entering into force of the Protocol 24 March 2011 the period of much more responsible behaviour towards development and protection of Mediterranean coastal zones began, i.e. the activities and evolution of coastal zones that is under human control has now on its legal mirror.

The implementation challenges in front of the Contracting Parties as well as for the MAP Secretariat, its supporting components and all other actors in the region are being spelt out in the draft Action Plan for the implementation of the ICZM Protocol for the Mediterranean. This is a document that sets out a range of actions required in the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 as priorities in this initial phase of the Protocol implementation.

The ICZM Protocol implementation represents therefore a tremendous challenge. In this respect, the PAP/RAC, mandated to assist the Parties in the implementation of the priorities agreed in the Action Plan, focuses its activities along the major requirements of the Protocol. A plethora of various methodological documents, demonstration projects, tools, training and awareness raising activities are in the core to be delivered.

## References

UNEP/MAP/PAP: Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean. Split, Priority Actions Programme, 2008.