Minimizing the Offshore Wind energy development in Marine Protected Areas

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Interreg Mediterranean EUROPEAN UNION PHAROS4MPAs

Project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund

Blue Growth Community – 1st Capitalization event

November 10th -11th, 2020

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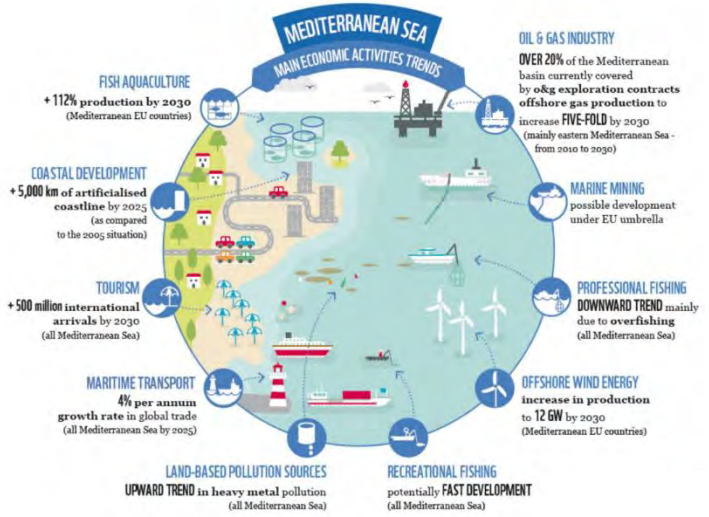
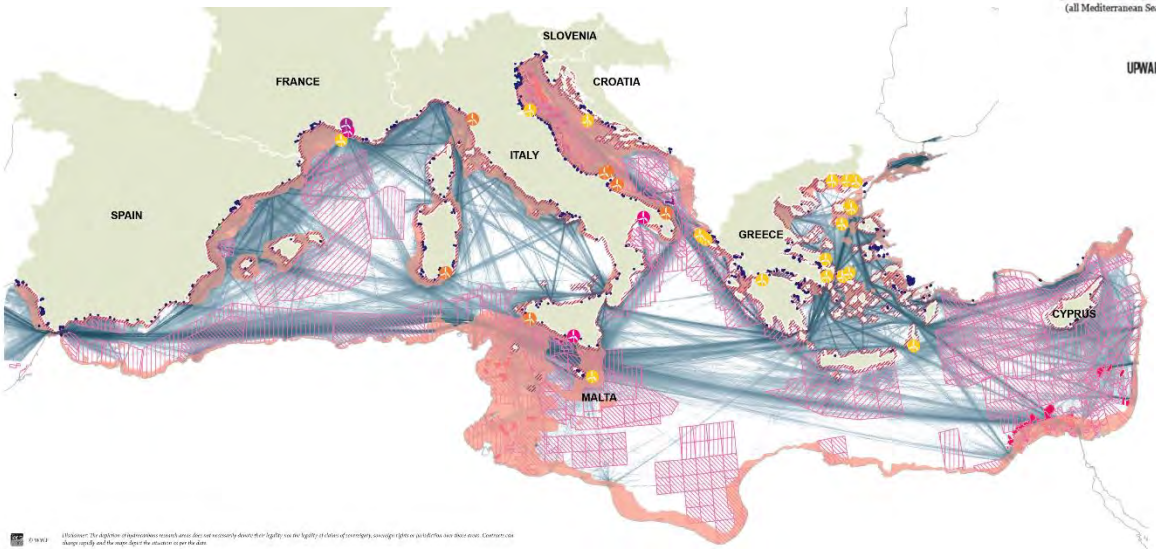
The Mediterranean, a vulnerable sea already overcrowded

The Mediterranean Sea under pressure:

- All maritime sectors in 1% of the global ocean
- A strong competition for space
- A marine spatial planning in preliminary stages



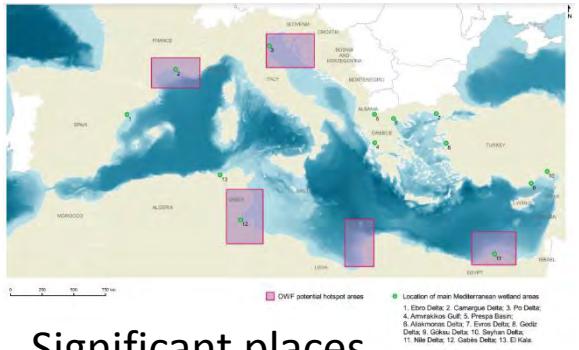


Interaction between offshore wind energy and marine life preservation

The Mediterranean Sea is considered one of the most complex and diverse marine environments and yet, its state shows sign of unprecedented decline

Important Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas

Bird biodiversity hotspots



Significant places for migratory species (the door from Europe to Africa)

Interaction between offshore wind energy and marine life preservation

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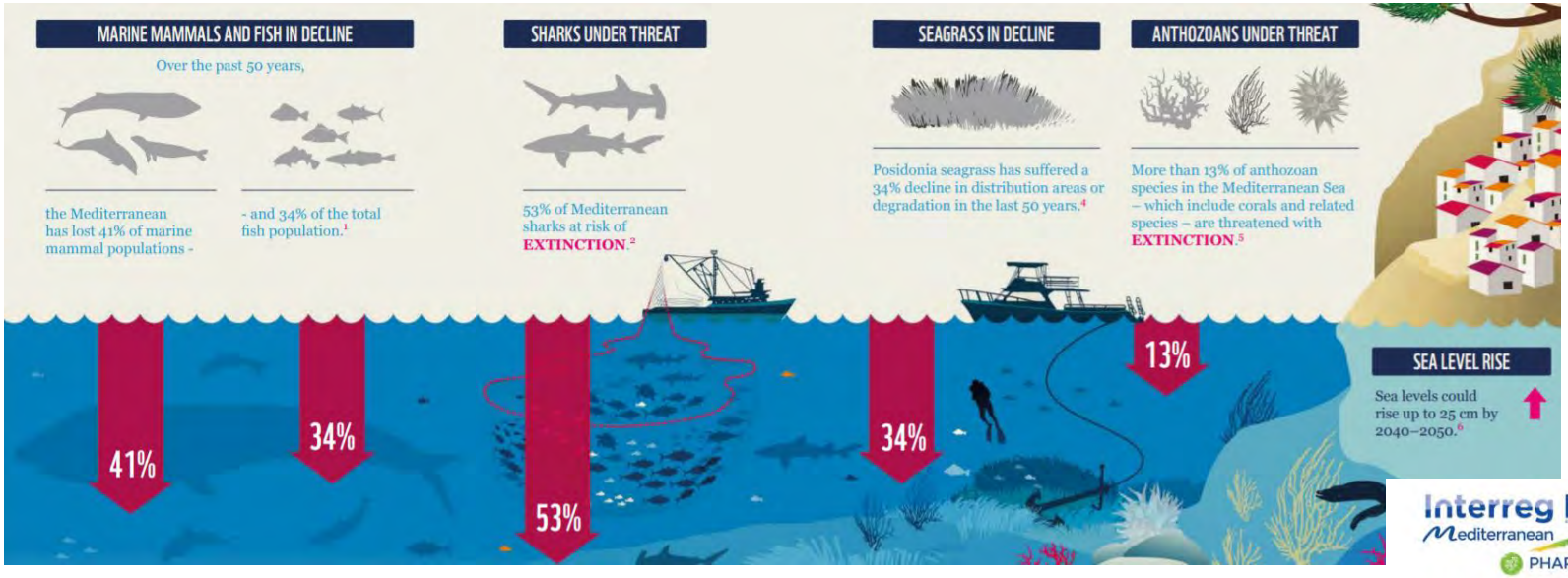
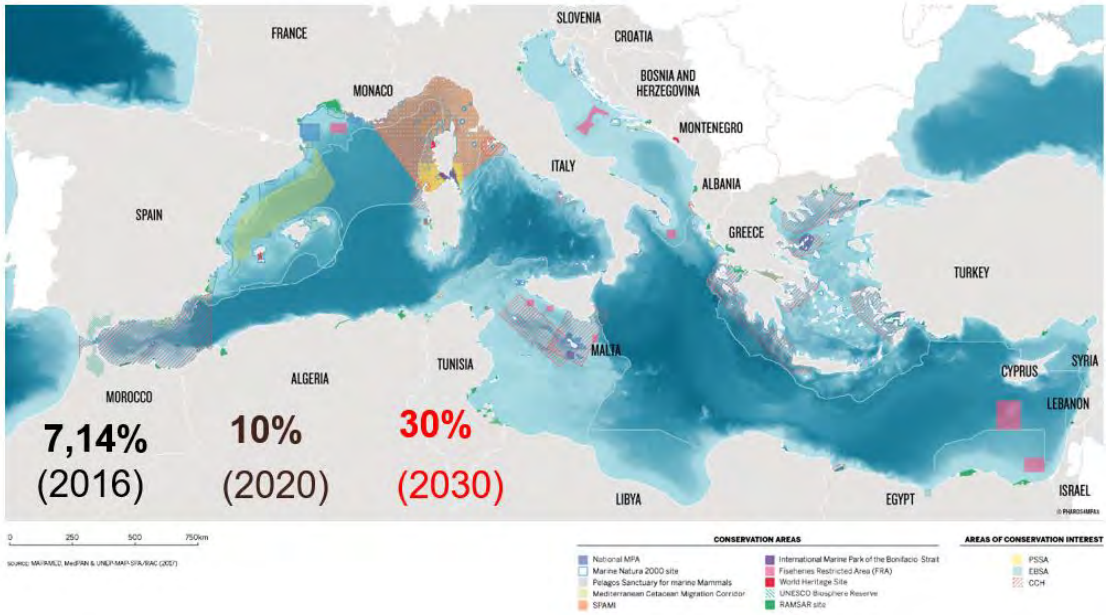
The many species affected by the impacts of offshore wind farms are already very vulnerable



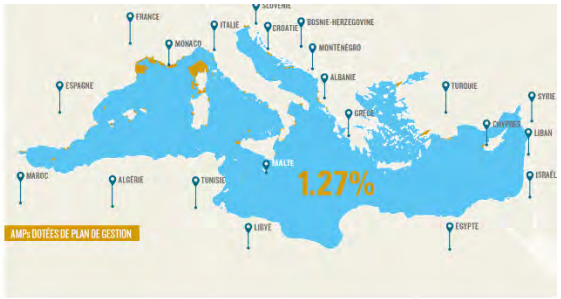
A need for effective Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas

Marine protected areas are one of the most effective in reversing the trend

The objective is one third of the Mediterranean under protection, most probably in areas with high wind potential



The management of MPA is still not effective and most of them are multi use MPAs -> Shall we tolerate an additional maritime sector?



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A need for effective Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas

The PHAROS4MPAs project explores how Mediterranean MPAs are affected by activities in the growing Blue Economy, and provides a set of practical recommendations for regional stakeholders on how the environmental impacts of key sectors can be prevented or minimized.

Deliver an integrated framework for recommendations for maritime sector such as offshore wind energy

- A first capitalization work on offshore windfarm impact from Northern Europe experience adapted to the Mediterranean context
- Overview tables on environmental measures
- Specific analysis on Marine Protected Areas and Natura 2000 marine sites
- A Mediterranean viewpoint

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Pursuing a precautionary approach

One strong recommendation

Identify potential future locations for OWFs through Strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and guide renewable energy away from ecologically sensitive areas in general and MPAs in particular

An additional recommendation

Sensitivity mapping is one of the most valuable tools for effective OWF planning, helping developers and regulators in the early stages of decision-making to steer development away from sensitive areas where negative interactions are most likely to happen. This also reduces business risk

- MSP should follow the ecosystem approach to reach or maintain Good Environmental Status as well as Favourable Conservation Status. This needs strong strategic environmental assessment (SEA) to identify potential future locations for OWFs and guide renewable energy away from ecologically sensitive areas in general and MPAs in particular. MSP should also consider cumulative impacts and assess them more broadly.
- Decision-making processes regarding future locations for OWFs should carefully consider aspects of nature conservation and aim to avoid ecologically valuable and protected areas. Effective, ecosystem-based MSP and SEAs should as far as possible ensure that renewable energy is not deployed in those areas that contain habitats, species and/or ecological processes that are particularly sensitive to its impacts, whether during construction or operation. Sensitivity mapping is one of the most valuable tools for effective renewable energy planning, helping developers and regulators in the early stages of decision-making to steer wind energy development away from sensitive areas where negative interactions are most likely to happen. This also reduces business risk.