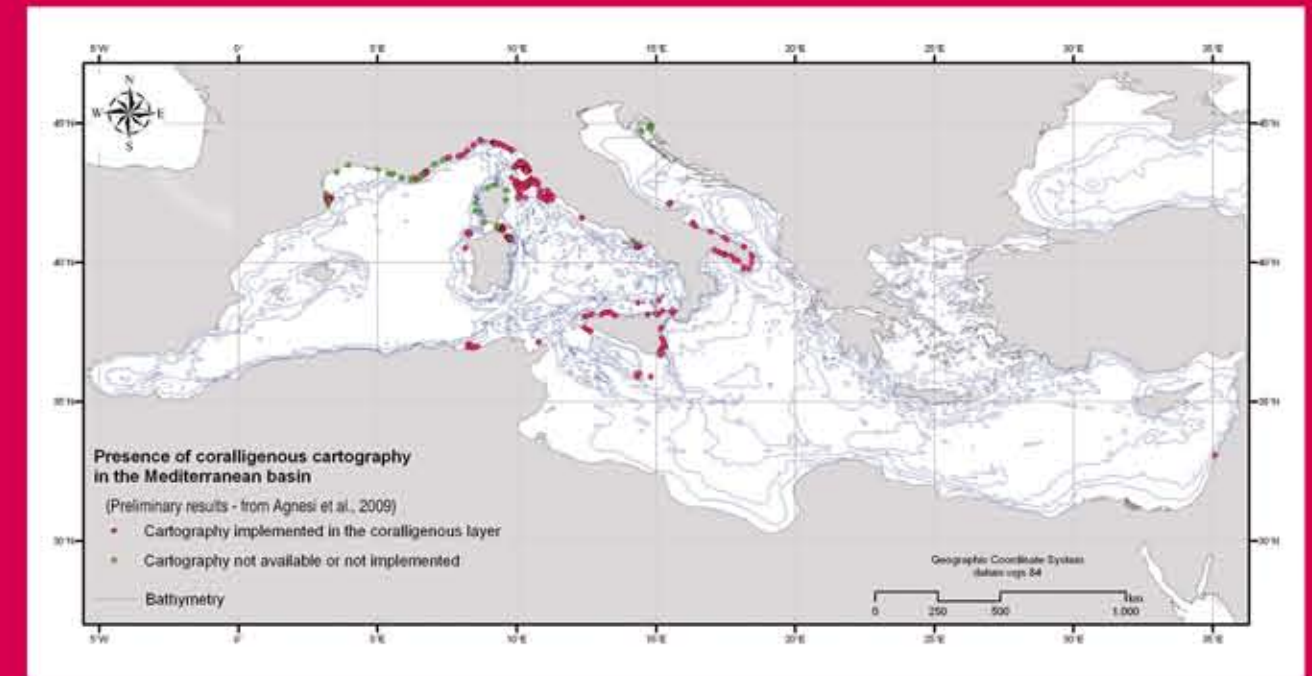


ACTION PLAN FOR THE CONSERVATION OF THE CORALLIGENOUS AND OTHERS CALCAREOUS BIO-CONCRETIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA

« Adopted in 2008 »



The Action Plan is devoted to Coralligenous concretions, a typical Mediterranean underwater seascape comprising coralline algal frameworks that grow in dim light conditions and relatively calm waters, and Mediterranean Maerl beds, that can be considered as sedimentary bottoms covered by free-living calcareous algae (rhodoliths). These assemblages are one of the most important hot-spots of species diversity in the Mediterranean, together with *Posidonia oceanica* meadows.



OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the Action plan is to allow the conservation of the coralligenous and others calcareous bio-concretions in the Mediterranean Sea, rising solidarity and scientific cooperation between States and increasing the knowledge concerning these assemblages (distribution, functioning, threats) in order to implement efficient management measures

PRIORITIES

Data collection and inventories

- To identify gaps concerning the current state of knowledge of the coralligenous habitats and maerl beds
- To establish a reference list of species that are found in coralligenous outcrops
- To make accurate inventory in some well known and representative locations

Monitoring activities

- To perform monitoring to answer questions concerning
 - (1) the changes through time in the coralligenous and maerl assemblages,
 - (2) the viability of the populations thriving in these assemblages, in response to natural or anthropogenic disturbances,
 - (3) The identification of bioindicators,
 - (4) The efficiency of management measures.

Conservation activities

To increase the legal protection of coralligenous and maerl assemblages and to protect some representative localities

ACTIONS TO ATTAIN THESE OBJECTIVES

- To compile all existing information and create databases on coralligenous assemblages and maerl beds (distribution, taxonomy, list of specialists)
- To encourage field missions and scientific studies
- To implement actual tools (Website, GIS) to update the available knowledge and fill in the gaps.
- To identify existing methods for the monitoring and to adopt a standardised approach or at least common methods
- To encourage the promulgation of national legislations
- To establish marine protected areas (MPAs) specially devoted to the protection of coralligenous and maerl assemblages
- To organise, regularly a regional symposium to evaluate the status of the coralligenous and maerls assemblages (regarding scientific knowledge and conservation)

