



OECMs-Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures: a spatial tool for marine biodiversity mainstreaming in sectoral policies

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The term “other effective area-based conservation measures” has been used, for the first time, in the context of the “Strategic Plan for Biodiversity” adopted by 10th COP to the UN Convention on Biological diversity. Target 11 of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets called for 10% of marine and coastal areas to be conserved through “effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures”.

In brief, the CoP recognized that protected areas are not the only area-based management tool (ABMT) that provides biodiversity conservation and recognized that there are other areas, established for other purposes, in other sectors (fishing, shipping, security, underwater archaeology), where existing management tools indirectly benefit biodiversity. Consequently, States are allowed to recognize and report these areas for the achievement of global biodiversity targets, including the 30x30 objective set out by the 15th CoP, for 2030.

OECMs are based on the ecosystem approach and are being discussed in several international fora to determine the criteria for their identification, to distinguish OECMs from protected areas, to identify the sectorial ABMTs included in this concept and to address existing issues.

The presentation focuses on marine OECMs, namely on fisheries-related OECMs in the Mediterranean Sea, discussing current developments (UNEP/MAP, UE, FAO/GFCM, IUCN ...) and presenting examples on GFCM’s Fisheries Restricted Areas. These examples will serve as a basis for discussing problems emerging in the application of the OECM concept to existing areas (Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas, Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems, IMO Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas, Important Marine Mammal Areas, etc.) as well as the opportunities and challenges associated with the implementation of OECMs (i.e., consistency between the spatial and non-spatial measures, threats assessment, adverse impacts to be managed to achieve conservation objectives, cross–sectoral cooperation).