



EMPAFISH is a project supported by the European Community within the specific programme "Integrating and strengthening the ERA" (6th Framework Programme), under the activity "Scientific Support to Policies" and the research priority for "Modernisation and sustainability of fisheries, including aquaculture-based production system".

The project, which runs from March 2005 to February 2008, represents real progress in the management of MPAs in the European context, as the results of the project will permit:

1. Selection and validation of appropriate tools (indicators, protocols and procedures) to evaluate the performance of MPAs (under different management regimes).
2. Application and enhancement of eco-modelling tools, facilitating their usefulness and applicability for management purposes.
3. Provision of guidelines for the definition of objectives, design, location, management and monitoring of European MPAs, based on a multidisciplinary scheme, using the best empirical information available to date.
4. Facilitation of the incorporation of stakeholders within the management of coastal zones.

The general objectives are:

- To investigate the potential of different regimes of MPAs in Europe to protect sensitive and endangered species, habitats and ecosystems from the effect of fishing.
- To develop quantitative methods to assess the effects of marine protected areas.
- To provide the EU with a set of integrated measures and policy proposals for the implementation of MPAs as fisheries and ecosystem management tools.

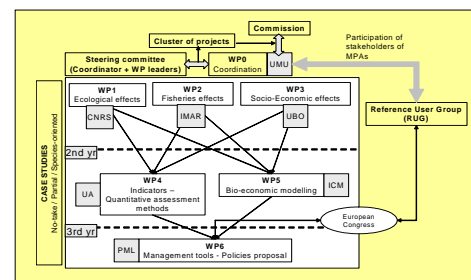


The project brings together scientists with expertise in marine ecology, fisheries and ecological modelling, and coastal area management particularly relating to MPAs, and will convene a stakeholders committee (Reference User Group, RUG) comprising administrators (local, regional and national), fisheries managers, fishermen's organizations and other social stakeholders (tourist consortia responsible for diving activities and affected by the development of MPAs).



EMPAFISH is organised in 7 workpackages:

- WP0: Coordination of overall project
- WP1: Ecological effects of MPAs
- WP2: Fishery effects of MPAs
- WP3: Socio-economic impacts of MPAs
- WP4: Providing and evaluating impact indicators of MPAs
- WP5: Bio-economic modelling of MPA effects
- WP6: Management tools – Policy proposals



• Workpackages 1-3 aim to identify and quantify ecological (WP1), fishery (WP2) and socio-economic (WP3) effects of MPAs, and to produce a field database for subsequent global meta-analysis and modelling.

• A set of indicators will be chosen to represent the performance of MPAs with respect to their objectives under the different management regimes and MPA typologies identified (WP4). Indicators are intended to enhance communication, transparency, effectiveness and accountability in the management of MPAs.

• WP6 aims to produce guidelines and tools, to be integrated into the decision-making and management process, that will provide an improved basis for designing, selecting and managing protected areas. WP6 will seek to identify the relationships between management and protection initiatives and their effects on biodiversity and fish and invertebrate stocks. In addition, management plans and tools to harmonize fisheries, conservation and other productive uses will be formulated.

The project will collate and analyse existing ecological, fisheries, and socio-economic data from established, well-studied MPAs selected as case studies:

- 1: Cabo de Palos
- 2: Tabarca
- 3: San Antonio
- 4: Serra Gelada and Benidorm small islands
- 5: Columbretes Islands
- 6: Anti-trawling zones at SE Spain
- 7: Medes Islands
- 8: Banyuls-Cerbère
- 9: Côte Bleue
- 10: Sinis Maldiventre
- 11: Bouches de Bonifacio
- 12: Ustica
- 13: Castellammare gulf / Trawl ban area
- 14: La Graciosa
- 15: La Restinga
- 16: Monte da Guia / Faial
- 17: Formigas islet / Dollabarat bank
- 18: Tuscany Archipelago
- 19: 25 NM Fisheries Conservation Zone-Malta
- 20: Rdm Majjiesa / Ras ir-Raheb



Participants:



Scientific Project Coordinator:
Dr. Angel Pérez-Ruzafa

angelpr@um.es

Departamento de Ecología e Hidrología
Facultad de Biología. Universidad de Murcia