



**Mediterranean  
Action Plan**  
Barcelona  
Convention



**Call for small-scale projects N°08/2025\_SPARAC\_MASE**

### **CALL FOR SMALL-SCALE PROJECTS**

**IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES FOR THE CONSERVATION OF  
CARTILAGINOUS FISHES IN THE ADRIATIC REGION**

**April 2025**

## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

### **Section 1. The Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre**

The Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC) <sup>1</sup> was established by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in order to assist the Mediterranean countries in implementing the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA/BD Protocol<sup>2</sup>) of the Barcelona Convention. Tunisia has been hosting the Centre since its establishment in 1985. The Centre works under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme / Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) - Barcelona Convention Secretariat<sup>3</sup>, based in Athens, Greece.

SPA/RAC's main objective is to contribute to the protection, preservation and sustainable management of marine and coastal biological diversity in the Mediterranean and, in particular, the creation and effective management of marine and coastal areas of particular natural and cultural value and the conservation of threatened and endangered species of flora and fauna in the Mediterranean.

### **Section 2. Rationale**

Cartilaginous species, including elasmobranchs (sharks and rays) and chimaeras, are considered as the most endangered group of marine species, as showed in the IUCN Red List: 39 species are critically endangered, endangered, or vulnerable, and 13 % are data deficient (DD).

The Mediterranean is the area in the world with the highest proportion of threatened species of this group, because of the overfishing, the wide use of non-selective fishing practices, and the habitat degradation. In fact, there is evidence that the elasmobranchs of the area are declining in abundance, diversity, and range due primarily to the intense fishing activity. The Mediterranean Sea has lost more than 97 percent in number and "catch weight" of their elasmobranch's population over the last 200 years (Fretty et al. 2008).

Although the Mediterranean chondrichthyan fish fauna has been studied for a long time, scientific research still needs to be undertaken to study the biology, ecology, population dynamics and status of stocks of most of the species. These studies are necessary to better understand their ecological role, the impact of the identified threats as well as the mitigation measures. In the Adriatic region in particular, and based on an overview report on the status of elasmobranch, three key actions need to be implemented: monitoring, management and national capacities building.

The Action Plan for the conservation of the chondrichthyan populations of the Mediterranean <sup>4</sup> have been adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in 2003, and updated three time in 2009, 2013 and 2019, as a response to growing international concern about the status of these species in the Mediterranean.

In this context, SPA/RAC received financial support under the bilateral agreement between UNEP/MAP and the Ministry of Environment and Energy Security (MASE), to assist the implementation of its Programme of Work 2024-2025.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.spa-rac.org/en/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.spa-rac.org/en/6/spa-bd-protocol>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.unep.org/unepmap/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.spa-rac.org/en/article/53/action-plan-on-cartilaginous-fishes>

With this regard, the SPA/RAC will provide financial support for small-scale projects aimed at implementing communication initiatives to conserve cartilaginous fish in the Adriatic region. These initiatives will be collaboratively followed by SPA/RAC and INFO/RAC<sup>5</sup>. Potential activities may include the creation of educational materials, videos, infographics, social media campaigns, interactive websites, and outreach events.

### **Section 3. Beneficiary countries**

This call for small-scale projects is dedicated for the Adriatic region: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy, Montenegro and Slovenia.

### **Section 4. Objective**

The objective of this call for small-scale projects is to support communication initiatives aimed at conserving cartilaginous fish (sharks, rays, and skates) in the Adriatic region. These projects should be designed to raise awareness, educate the public, and foster collaboration among stakeholders on the importance of protecting these species. By funding local and innovative communication efforts, SPA/RAC aims to enhance species knowledge, understanding of the threats facing cartilaginous fish and encourage sustainable practices that contribute to their long-term conservation.

### **Section 5. Eligibility criteria**

This call is open for small-scales projects for the implementation of communication initiatives to conserve the cartilaginous fishes **only in the Adriatic region**, as mentioned above in section 3.

The call is open to NGOs, universities, scientists, research institutes, media and organisations that are working on the study / conservation of cartilaginous fish, and/or with extensive experience in environmental information and awareness-raising activities in the Adriatic Sea.

The candidate wishing to apply for this call for projects must have legal status enabling it to receive grants by bank transfer.

To ensure the successful implementation of this project, the applicant must demonstrate effective collaboration and transparent communication with the relevant authority. Applicants must also provide evidence of their legal status, relevant experience, and managerial capacity to be eligible for the grant.

The candidate should work on at least one of the cartilaginous fishes listed in the Annex II and III (Cf. Decision IG26/4)<sup>6</sup> of the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA/BD Protocol).

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.info-rac.org/fr/homepage>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.spa-rac.org/fr/decision/download/1674/amendements-aux-annexes-ii-et-iii-du-protocole-relatif-aux-aires-specialement-protgees-et-a-la-diversite-biologique-en-mediterranee?type=en>

## **Section 6. Eligible activities**

The actions proposed by the applicant must be in line with at least one of the objectives presented below:

### **1. Awareness and Education**

- Educate / inform / raise awareness among local fishers and community members on sustainable fishery practices / identification / importance of endangered and threatened cartilaginous fishes.

### **2. Community Engagement and Stakeholder Collaboration**

- Engage local fishers, NGOs, and policymakers to build community-based conservation networks.
- Promote collaborative activities between scientists, conservationists, and local authorities to enhance protection efforts.
- Encourage stakeholder involvement in monitoring and reporting of species population and health.

### **3. Promotion of Sustainable Fishing Practices**

- Enhance fishers' capacities on techniques to reduce bycatch and support sustainable fishing.
- Advocate for and implement bycatch reduction strategies.
- Introduce and promote eco-friendly fishing gear and methods.

### **4. Policy Advocacy and Support**

- Advocate for conservation policies that protect cartilaginous species.
- Support the enforcement of existing regulations on endangered and protected species.
- Engage in policy dialogue to address gaps in conservation law and strengthen regulatory frameworks.

### **5. Media and Communication Initiatives**

- Raise awareness about the threats to cartilaginous fish.
- Highlight the ecological role and conservation needs of sharks, rays, and other cartilaginous species.
- Promote species-specific conservation stories through local and regional media outlets.

**Projects must include as many concrete, effective and coherent actions as possible.**

## **Section 7. Tasks and expected deliverables**

The candidate will contribute to performing the following tasks:

- **TASK 1:** Implementation of the small-scale projects according to the submitted detailed work plan and timetable.
- **TASK 2:** Elaboration of the final technical and financial progress report (**Deliverable 1**) including all the related data and materials and a 15–20-minute presentation in PowerPoint of all the activities achieved (**Deliverable 2**), two communicative brochures and high quality photos and videos (at least a short video for each activity – 30 seconds) related to the implementation of all the activities implemented for dissemination through social media and websites targeting a wide audience. (**Deliverable 3**).

## **Section 8. Duration, deliverables and schedule for implementation**

The First Call for the projects will be launched on **4 April 2025** and the application form is available on the SPA/RAC website on the following link (<https://shorturl.at/k6j4s>). All applicants should submit their full proposals with the supportive materials by **21 April 2025**.

By **28 April 2025**, all applicants will receive the results of the selection procedure and MoU signatures will proceed immediately afterwards between SPA/RAC and the selected entities.

All applicants should take into consideration that their projects' duration should not exceed **25 June 2025**. The deadline set to receive the final report, and a copy of the data is **30 June 2025**.

## **Section 9. Terms of payment**

The SPA/RAC contribution to each project will be a maximum of **USD 15,000**.

The payment will be made as follows:

- **50%** of the total amount of the contract, upon signature of the contract.
- **50%** of the total amount of the contract, after submission of the **deliverables 1, 2, 3 and all the related data and materials as indicated in Section 7**, their approval by SPA/RAC, and submission of an invoice.

## **Section 10. Procedure for submitting applications**

The application must contain the following documents:

1. A grant application.
2. A cover letter outlining the applicant (s) suitability for the project.
3. A curriculum vitae (CV) of the project team members and a list of previous relevant works (publications / conservation activities of cartilaginous fish, environmental information and awareness-raising activities) with a brief presentation showing the objective and impacts of each initiative as well as documents/URL links/certificates that support the relevant references presented.
4. A detailed work plan, activities and related budget, methodology.
5. Applicants must provide evidence of their legal status to be eligible for the grant: document certifying the ability to practice this mission (registration certificate, for example) according to the legislation of their country with the tax number on it.
6. A sworn statement that the applicant is in no situation that could in any way be incompatible with the mission or compromise independence in carrying out the mission.
7. Terms of reference signed (date, signature and stamp of the provider at the end of the document).

Each applicant may submit only one (01) application for this call for projects.

Applications must be received electronically at the following e-mail address: [procurement@spa-rac.org](mailto:procurement@spa-rac.org), before **Tuesday 21 April 2025, at 23:59 UTC+1 (Tunis Time)**.

E-mails should have the following subject: **"Call for small-scale projects N°08/2025\_SPA/RAC\_MASE– 'Applicant name'"**.

**Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered.**

Should questions or need for clarification related to these terms of reference and their content arise, tenders may submit a written request by e-mail to: [procurement@spa-rac.org](mailto:procurement@spa-rac.org); cc: [lobna.bennakhla@spa-rac.org](mailto:lobna.bennakhla@spa-rac.org) , [wassim.gaidi@spa-rac.org](mailto:wassim.gaidi@spa-rac.org) and [assistant2@spa-rac.org](mailto:assistant2@spa-rac.org) no later than five (7) calendar days before the deadline for the proposal submission.

**Section 11. Selection procedures**

An ad hoc committee will be set up within the SPA/RAC to select the projects applying to this call for projects.

The selection will be based on a grid of criteria (table below) that will result in an overall score for each application and a ranking of the applicants.

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- (i) **Profile (experience, references and project team)** of the of applicant (s) in relation to the subject of the present mission **(30 points)**; and
- (ii) **The activities and related budget** proposed by the of applicant (s) for conducting the project **(30 points)**; and
- (iii) **The methodology** proposed for conducting the mission **(20 points)**.
- (iv) **Detailed work plan (20 points)**.

The committee will eliminate applications from candidates that are not eligible for a grant under this call for small-scale projects and will then make the selection.

**IMPORTANT: Any application that has not attained the minimum score of 80 points will be eliminated.**

Technical evaluation grid			
Criteria			Scoring
Profile (experience, references and project team)	Experience	- Extensive experience in conducting projects on cartilaginous fishes in the Adriatic Sea. - Proven skills and experiences in raise awareness and public education activities.	<b><u>20 points maximum</u></b> (4 points/reference)
		No similar references	0 points <i>(In this case the offer is eliminated)</i>
	Project team	The team has relevant expertise for the project, with an optimal balance of members, and is able to ensure the effective delivery of the proposed activities.	<b><u>10 points maximum</u></b>
		The team has adequate expertise, though the number of members may be slightly insufficient, potentially impacting the full execution of certain activities.	5 points
		The team lacks both sufficient numbers and the necessary expertise, which may limit their ability to carry out the proposed activities effectively.	0 point <i>(In this case the offer is eliminated)</i>
Relevance of the project (activities and related budget)		The activities are innovative and well-designed to effectively enhance the conservation of cartilaginous fish in the Adriatic Sea, with an appropriate budget proposal.	<b><u>30 points maximum</u></b>
		The activities are well-designed to effectively enhance the conservation of cartilaginous fish in the Adriatic Sea, with an appropriate budget proposal.	20 points
		The activities and budget are moderately developed, limiting their ability to meaningfully enhance the conservation of cartilaginous fishes in the Adriatic Sea.	10 points
		The activities and budget are insufficiently developed, limiting their ability to meaningfully enhance the conservation of cartilaginous fishes in the Adriatic Sea.	0 point <i>(In this case the offer is eliminated)</i>
Methodology proposed for conducting the mission, and observations/analysis on the terms of reference		Methodology clearly presented, well developed and in line with the terms of reference and objectives of the call for small-scale projects	<b><u>20 points maximum</u></b>
		Methodology not fully developed but meets the terms of reference and objectives of the call for small-scale projects	10 points
		Methodology not clearly presented and does not meet the terms of reference and objectives of the call for small-scale projects, Or No methodology presented	0 point <i>(In this case the offer is eliminated)</i>
Detailed work plan		Planning is clearly presented, well developed and meets the terms of reference and objectives of the call for small-scale projects	<b><u>20 points maximum</u></b>
		Planning is not developed but meets the terms of reference and objectives of the call for small-scale projects	10 points

	Planning not clearly presented and does not meet the terms of reference and objectives of the call for small-scale projects or No planning presented	0 point  <i>(In this case the offer is eliminated)</i>
<b>Total score (100 points maximum)</b>		<b>... points</b>