



MED4EBM



Mediterranean Forum For Applied Ecosystem-Based Management

**First Annual Report
(October 2019-Sep 2020)**





MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

Contents

Background	5
Introduction	6
About the Project	7
Project Area	8
Project Partners	9
Lead Beneficiary - United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Jordan Country Office	9
Project Partner 1 (PP1) - PROGES - Planning and Development Consulting	9
Project Partner 2 (PP2) - Managing body of "Natural Reserve of Lake Tarsia and the mouth of the Crati River" - Association Friends of the Earth (ADT)	9
Project Partner 3 (PP3) - Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan (JREDS)	9
Project Partner 4 (PP4) - National Institute of Marine Sciences and Technologies (INSTM)	10
Project Partner 5 (PP5) - Tire Coast Nature Reserve (TCNR)	10
Partnerships	10
Visibility	11
Job Creation	12
Project Activity Progress	12
Meetings of the Project Steering Committee	12
Kick-off Meeting & Semester 1 - Steering Committee Meeting	12
Semester 2 - Steering Committee Meeting	15
Preparation of Project's Manuals and Templates	16



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

Semester Task-Plans Plans, Progress-Technical and Financial Reports.	16
Preparation Task-Plans Plans, Progress-Technical and Financial Reports (Semester 1)	16
Day-to-day management and decision-making for the project implementation	16
Preparation Task-Plans Plans, Progress-Technical and Financial Reports (Semester 2)	17
Communication and Visibility Plan of the Project	17
Drafting and Approval of the Communication and Visibility Plan	17
Set up of a Communication Group	17
Preparation of communication materials	18
Opening and Feeding of Social Media	21
Organizations of Ad Hoc Sensitization Events in Each Target Area	22
Structural Models of the Ecological and Socio-Economic Dynamics of the Four Project’s Target Areas	24
Qualitative Modelling of the Socio-Ecological ICZM Dynamics	24
Structural Models of the Ecological and Socio-Economic Dynamics of the Four Project’s Target Areas	25
Development of a Tailor-made EB-ICZM-DSS Software Tool for Each of the Project’s Target Areas	25
Design and Execution of Full-Fledged Training Packages	31
Risk and Constrains	32
Next year plan	33



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

Background

European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) - Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC), ENI CBC Med is a Home to some of the world's most ancient civilizations, hub for trade and transport, unique hotspot for biodiversity, the Mediterranean faces a multitude of common challenges, including climate change, pollution, youth unemployment and social inequality.

ENI CBCMED is acting together to address these challenges and improve the lives of men and women across the region is the impetus for the 2014-2020 ENI CBC "Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme". ENI CBC Med is the largest Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) initiative implemented by the EU under the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI).

The Programme brings together the coastal territories of 14 EU and partner countries in view of fostering fair, equitable and sustainable development on both sides of the EU's external borders.

Through calls for proposals, ENI CBC Med finances cooperation projects for a more competitive, innovative, inclusive and sustainable Mediterranean area.

As part of ENI CBC Med mission to foster cooperation for more competitive, innovative, inclusive and sustainable Mediterranean area, Mediterranean Forum For Applied Ecosystem-Based Management (MED4EBM) project was funded under the thematic objective B.4 Environmental protection, climate change adaptation and mitigation; to add another step toward achieving priority B.4.4 Integrated coastal zone management (ICZM)



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Introduction

The Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (SD) reaffirms the urgent need to the effective protect of coastal areas. 20 targets in 5 of the 17 SDGs are related to managing and conserving marine/coastal areas, firmly establishing the role of Integrated Coastal zone management (ICZM) as a core SD strategy.

MED4EBM is assisting ICZM actors in four coastal areas to jointly develop and apply common methods and tools to make ecosystem-based ICZM (EB-ICZM) much easier to design and implement. A set of software tools based on a multi-windows interface will be used by institutional actors to establish EB-ICZM cross-border cooperation and coordination platforms.

The general objective of the MED4EBM project is contribute to the preservation and sustainable development of Mediterranean coastal zones for the benefit of present and future generations by establishing effective ecosystem-based ICZM protocols.

ICZM is an integral part of social and economic development, and becomes essential for development being sustainable in the long term; MED4EBM is therefore a key initiative for achieving SD in ENICBCMED Cooperation Area.

MED4EBM is implemented in full partnership with all concerned stakeholders with focus on local authorities, NGOs, research institutions, and the private sector.

MED4EBM is coordinating-with and building-upon other levant initiatives in its target areas, thus ensuring a good level of coordination between all institutions, non-governmental and private organisations toward the effective governance of ICZM dynamics.

The specific objectives of MED4EBM project are as follows:

1. Enhancing capacities of various stakeholders and institutional actors involved in the management of coastal and marine areas, with a specific focus on the Ecosystem-Based Management practices in the Mediterranean.



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

2. Establishing a cooperation and coordination platform for administrators of institutions and stakeholders involved in the management of coastal and marine areas to effectively implement ecosystem-based EBM-ICZM.
3. Apply and pilot-testing a straight-forward methodological protocol and a standard management tool to facilitate coordination and harmonization of conservation and sustainable development practices and facilitate dialogue between practitioners of EBM in the Mediterranean.

About the Project

The actual mainstreaming of Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM) in Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) is still limited mainly because the practical application of EBM is a challenging task for ICZM actors. The MED4EBM project will tackle this issue by assisting ICZM actors in four coastal areas of Jordan, Italy, Lebanon and Tunisia to jointly develop and apply a common methodology to make ecosystem-based ICZM much easier to design and implement by applying innovative techniques and methods. A software tool will help institutional actors to better handle the complex multi-stakeholders analytical processes that characterize EBM applications and assess the relationships between ecosystem components, functions and services, as well as the associated human activities. Moreover, the project will provide government officials and managers with the necessary tools, skills and competences to develop and implement ecosystem approaches to the management of activities in the marine and coastal environments.

These techniques and methods help handling the ICZM multi-stakeholders analytical processes through a straight-forward path, based on deterministic rather than the statistical / algorithmic ecological and socio-economic assessments which characterize the other business-as-usual EBM and ICZM approaches. This process will be facilitated by a software tool based on a multi-windows GIS interface for the browsing and the spatial analysis of large EBM and ICZM datasets, through an ecosystem-based logical framework linking spatial and time scales of the various thematic sectors these datasets refer to.

ICZM stakeholders and institutional actors can thus easily establish ecosystem-based ICZM local / national and regional / cross-border cooperation and coordination platforms. Governments and other



MED4EBM

MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

ICZM stakeholders can use these platforms to take informed decisions for establishing Ecosystem-Based governance protocols (Output 4. 2) for coastal and marine resources. Institutions concerned with ICZM in the four Project's target areas will also jointly undertake the spreading of the common methodology they have developed around the Mediterranean by establishing a joint EBM and ICZM regional Forum and Centre.

Project Area

MED4EBM is a three years project that is implemented in four countries:

- Italy
- Jordan
- Lebanon
- Tunisia

The selection of these four countries was based on the fact that they have identified hotspot areas at their marine ecosystems.





MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

Project Partners

Lead Beneficiary - United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Jordan Country Office

Established in 1976; the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is one of the United Nations Agencies working in Jordan and is the main convener of sustainable development.

As part of the global development system; UNDP Jordan upholds a vision focusing on the achievements of Sustainable Human Development in Jordan, ending poverty and reducing inequalities. UNDP is at the heart of the UN's work on sustainable development and a leader for the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals.

Project Partner 1 (PP1) - PROGES - Planning and Development Consulting

PROGES is an independent consulting firm drawing on a inter-disciplinary professional experts network, with a strong aptitude for combining intellectual competences with the ability to develop practical solutions and to field-work.

Project Partner 2 (PP2) - Managing body of "Natural Reserve of Lake Tarsia and the mouth of the Crati River" - Association Friends of the Earth (ADT)

Amici della Terra Italia Onlus, is an environmental association recognized by the Ministry of the Environment, active in Italy since 1978 with offices and addresses throughout the country. The Friends of the Earth promote policies and behaviors aimed at protecting the environment and sustainable development, through opinion campaigns, projects, environmental information and education, local initiatives.

Project Partner 3 (PP3) - Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan (JREDS)

The Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan (JREDS) was founded in 1993 by a group of concerned Jordanian ecological divers, headed by HRH Princess Basma bint Ali, one of the first female divers in Jordan.



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

The initiative, which started as a simple for-fun nature dive officially became the first specialized Jordanian non-profit, non-governmental organization dedicated to the conservation of the marine environment in 1995.

Project Partner 4 (PP4) - National Institute of Marine Sciences and Technologies (INSTM)

The National Institute of Marine Sciences and Technology (INSTM) is a public research institution. It dates back to 1924 when it was founded as the Salambo Oceanographic Station (SOS) and consisted of a research laboratory, a public museum, a library, and a reference collection gathering the different marine species.

Project Partner 5 (PP5) - Tyre Coast Nature Reserve (TCNR)

Tyre Coast Nature Reserve is one of the two declared Marine Reserves in Lebanon. TCNR is recognized as the most beautiful and largest last remaining sandy beach in Lebanon with great attraction to nesting marine turtles and hosting a mosaic of coastal habitats within a diversity of ecosystems comprising a wide variety of flora and fauna species that are playing important ecological roles with great medical, ornamental and commercial usages for humans.

Partnerships

MED4EBM is aware of the importance of partnering with relevant stakeholders to insure effective implementation of project activities, therefore building partnership with all concerned stakeholders with focus on local authorities, NGOs, research institutions, and the private sector is one of the main priorities of the project.

As a result of project activities during the first year of the project around 11 local partnerships were developed by PP3, PP4 and PP5.



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

Visibility

Dissemination of project activities and results is one of the main objectives of MED4EBM project in order to increase project momentum by raising awareness about ICZM and its importance which will enhance conservation and sustainable management behaviours. For this purpose each project partner (PP) has assigned a communication officer in order to be responsible for implementing the communication and visibility plan.

As part of communication and visibility activities each PP have launched a project specific page at their website as illustrated in the table below, as a result the project objective and activities have reached more than 13,487 individuals. To enhance project outreach, the importance of social media was noticed and adopted as a main tool of the communication and visibility plan, in which the most effective social media platforms were employed by PP, the employed platforms include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube.

Project Partner	Webpage Link
AdT	https://bit.ly/3f7b2jn
JERDs	https://www.jreds.org/en-us/Projects-Management/ArticleID/95/Mediterranean-Forum-For-Applied-Ecosystem-Based-Management-%C2%A0-MED4EBM
INSTM	http://www.instm.agrinet.tn/index.php/fr/projets/internationaux
TCNR	N/A

The effectiveness of social media platforms in reaching relevant stakeholders can be easily identified through the number of reaches and engagements, until the date of preparing this report the project social media activities have reached more than 24,246 person with 1,242 engagements (like, share, etc.) (11,231 person on Facebook with 685 engagements, 11,454 person on Twitter with 327 engagements, and 1,214 person on Instagram with 214 engagements, in addition to 347 persons was reached through YouTube with 6 engagement and 246 was reached through LinkedIn).



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

Job Creation

In addition to the environmental sound of the project, and its importance in preserving different environmental ecosystem, the MED4EBM project is contributing also in creating jobs for local specialists in the four project areas, in which 48 local specialists were assigned to implement project activities until now, the female staff among all partners is around 42% of the total staff assigned.

Project Activity Progress

Meetings of the Project Steering Committee

This project item include the execution of six meetings of the Project Steering Committee over the project period, in addition to one kick-off meeting that will, inter alia, set-up the management structure of the Project and a Final Conference.

Kick-off Meeting & Semester 1 - Steering Committee Meeting

All Project Partners (PPs) have attended the kickoff meeting held in Aqaba, the main purpose of the meeting was to discuss the following topics:

- Project objectives, expected outputs and activities
- General guidelines of the project implementation and Tips for the start up
- Communication plans



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Figure 1: Kick-Off and Semester 1 Meeting



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Figure 2: INSTM at Kick-Off and Semester 1 Meeting



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

Semester 2 - Steering Committee Meeting

The Project Steering Committees for Semester 2 was executed online due to COVID 19 restrictions. The meeting was conducted over two sessions according to the following:

Project Steering Committees Semester 2 - Part 1: The meeting was conducted on 17 July 2020, in which a representative from all PPs has attended the meeting in addition to BEN representatives. The main outcomes from this meeting are as follows:

- Arranging for Bilateral Meetings with each partner
- Organize the initial training for each partner focal point and share the training material. (Marco has shared the material recently and he is waiting for each partner to define a focal point to attend the training)
- Announcement Formats to be shared with TYNR to be compatible with ENI communication guidelines
- Reaching out the MA communication officer to standardize the ENI promotional materials and activities implementation.

Project Steering Committees Semester 2 - Part 2: Meeting was conducted on 05 August 2020, in which a representative from all PPs has attended the meeting in addition to BEN representatives. The main outcomes from this meeting are as follows:

- Reviewing of Previous Meeting Matters Arising (Nahed equipments and Budget.., and training)
- Discussing the description and clarification of the latest status of the project
- Discussing the technical and financial aspects related to the different project components
- Discussing the risks and issue



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

- First Interim Report Preparations and Submission Date
- Discussing the budget Major/Minor Changes Policy

Preparation of Project's Manuals and Templates

In order to enhance reporting of project progress and activities, several templates were developed and adopted that include; the adoption of a time-sheet for the project, and the development of an Interim report template, a financial Planning template and a progress report template.

Semester Task-Plans Plans, Progress-Technical and Financial Reports.

Preparation Task-Plans Plans, Progress-Technical and Financial Reports (Semester 1)

Beneficiary and Partners developed their task plans according also to their responsibilities in implementing the different WPs.

Day-to-day management and decision-making for the project implementation

The first year have included the assigning of project teams by all project partners, in which 45 team members were assigned to conduct project activities among four project partners (PP2, PP3, PP4 and PP5), in which 43 were full time employees and 2 Short-time employee who will partially participate in implementing project activities. it is important to mention that the procurement and contracting were conducted according to project guidelines and procedures.

The procurement of external auditor were carried out by all project partners in which 5 auditors were contracted by the five project partners

The five project partners are using their offices and facilities for managing the day-to-day activities of the project.

On another level, during the first year of the project around 11 partnerships were developed by PP3, PP4 and PP5.



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

Preparation Task-Plans Plans, Progress-Technical and Financial Reports (Semester 2)

As part of developing the 1st interim report, each project partner have developed their own contribution to the interim report (filling templates prepared by BEN) that include the achievements and activities conducted by them during the first year of the project, the data provided by each partner were then integrated by BEN in one final report.

Communication and Visibility Plan of the Project

Drafting and Approval of the Communication and Visibility Plan

The project communication and Visibility Plan was prepared and submitted and shared with all partners for their inputs, in which all applicable feedback were integrated in the final version of the plan, accordingly all partners have prepared their own customized plans.

Set up of a Communication Group

The communication officers of all partners have been assigned, and since the communication officer of the lead beneficiary was appointed on 8 September 2020, the communication officers of all partners start coordinating and collaborating in the activities of the communication group. The communication activities to cover the training phase have been agreed. A monthly online meeting of the communication group was agreed on 5 October 2020 and the WhatsApp group of the project's communication officers has been activated on 14 November 2020.

List of Communication Group Members:

1. Proges: Marco Falcetta
2. ADT: Francesco Martellini
3. JREDS: Waed Al Ajarmeh
4. INSTM: Ichrak Ben Hammouda
5. TCNR: Assaad Dor
6. UNDP: Tala Shakhanbeh



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

Preparation of communication materials

The project stationary was prepared and shared with all PPs,

Three project partners (PP2, PP3 and PP4) have published a MED4EBM dedicated page on their websites following the guideline of the ENI manual, with the purpose to share all the news about the project. Due to some technical issues related to website domain PP5 is still not publishing MED4EBM dedicated page on its website, although PP5 is currently working on resolving these issues and it is expected to have the page published by the early stages of semester 3.

Additionally PP2-ADT have given an interview to Coordination of International Policies of the Puglia Region, and as part of the communication and visibility activities conducted by PP3-JREDS several communication materials have been designed, that include T-Shirts and Banners for the Blue Dolphin photography competition held on 3 Feb 2020 and for Clean up the world campaign planned for 4th of October 2020.



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

Clean Up the World
MEMBER 2020

EVERY SMALL ACTION, MAKES A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE
2nd week 5-7th October, 2020

Logos at the top: ENI CBCMED, European Union, Regione Autonoma de Sardinia, and The Royal Marine Conservation Society (RMCS).

Logos at the bottom: urbaser, ACT (Aqaba Container Terminal), ALV (Legleties Village), AQABA (Aqaba International Convention Center), and MÖVENPICK RESORT & SPA TALA BAY AQABA.

AQABA DIVERS & in cooperation with the **Dive Centers in Aqaba**

Figure 3: JREDS - Clean-up the World Campaign



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Figure 4: JREDS - Clean-up the World Campaign



MED4EBM

MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report



Figure 5: JREDS - Blue Dolphin Competition

Opening and Feeding of Social Media

All project partners have use their social media channels to cover project's activities, the shared messages over the social media platforms have reached 24,246 person with 1,242 engagements (like, share, etc.) (11,231 person on Facebook with 685 engagements, 11,454 person on Twitter with 327 engagements, and 1,214 person on Instagram with 214 engagements, in addition to 347 persons was reached through YouTube with 6 engagement and 246 was reached through LinkedIn).



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

PPs have utilized different social media platforms in which PP2-ADT have used Facebook and Twitter, PP3-JREDS have used Facebook and Instagram, PP4-INSTM have used Facebook and YouTube, and PP5-TCNR have used Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram.

Organizations of Ad Hoc Sensitization Events in Each Target Area

Due to several constrains including COVID-19 situation, field awareness events were not able for implementation, however PP3-JREDS have managed to conduct 2 event, on 6 Feb. 2020, Blue Dolphin photography competition and on 5 October 2020 they have prepare and participated in "Clean up the world" campaign.

Additionally PP2-ADT, has designed an activity to be carried out in schools, due to its experience in that kind of awareness/sensitization campaigns. The draft has been presented at the communication group meeting on 16 November 2020, the concept was positively evaluated by the lead beneficiary and PP2 has been requested to develop it.

As for PP4-INSTM, their activities include the preparation of project's launching event in addition to hosting an Interreg Volunteer Youth (IVY) program volunteer.



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MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report



Figure 6: INSTM Participation in Local activities



Figure 7: INSTM Participation in Local activities



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

PP5-TCNR has also conducted some activities that include preparation for Awareness through Art campaign and the participation in clean-up the MED campaign.

Structural Models of the Ecological and Socio-Economic Dynamics of the Four Project's Target Areas

Ecosystem Context Analyses are conducted in each of the Project's target areas through participative processes built around three workshops. Structural models are constructed for the ecosystems' components and services, the associated human activities, and the interactions between them. This will provide an intuitive framework for understanding and managing the interactions between ecological dynamics and human activities.

Qualitative Modelling of the Socio-Ecological ICZM Dynamics

Activity deployment was affected by significant constraints to recover the 8-months initial start-up delay and to adapt to the Covid-19 restrictions (less than 5 months were available out of the 12 covered by this report). Partners worked simultaneously on both their initial project-mobilisation and on executing technical tasks, which were also squeezed to recover the said delay. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions in-presence workshops were replaced with webinars, thus multiplying the time needed to execute them because of the need to:

Split workshops in series of webinars with smaller groups of participants; avoid long sessions to handle webinars attendees' short attention span; simulate webinars in advance to enhance their effectiveness. All planned tasks were executed, and the related goals achieved as illustrated in the set of Deliverables for WP3. Recovery of the initial delay is underway; 3 of the 8 months will be recovered over the 9 months working period ending in Semester 3.



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

Structural Models of the Ecological and Socio-Economic Dynamics of the Four Project's Target Areas

An Ecosystem-based ICZM Decision Support Systems (EB-ICZM-DSS) is established in each of the Project's target areas.

The EB-ICZM-DSS tools enable the spatial and time analysis of EBM and ICZM datasets, via a multi-windows interface linking spatial and time scales of the various ecosystem and socio-economic dynamics these datasets refer to.

These tools allow decision-makers to integrate institutional goals, stakeholders' views, and public concerns into balanced and coherent management plans.

Development of a Tailor-made EB-ICZM-DSS Software Tool for Each of the Project's Target Areas

To recover MED4EBM initial start-up delay, some of the tasks functional to Output 3.2 were executed in parallel with those to Output 3.1. Therefore, some Activity 3.2.2 tasks, initially planned for Semester 4 were anticipated to Semester 2. These tasks were related to the establishment of the EB-ICZM-DSSs in the four MED4EBM target areas and to the related on-the-job training and data gathering activities.



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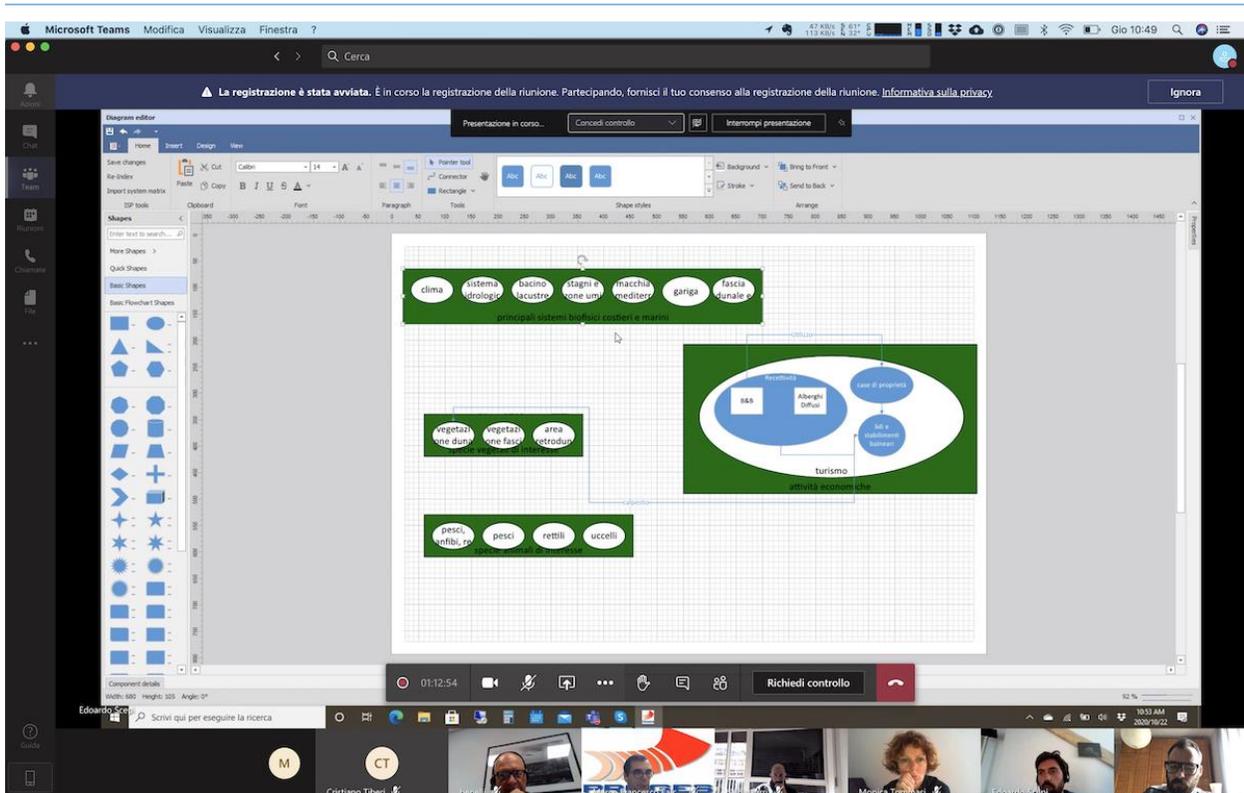


Figure 8: Screenshot of ADT software "online training"



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Figure 9: Screenshot of ADT software "online training"



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MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

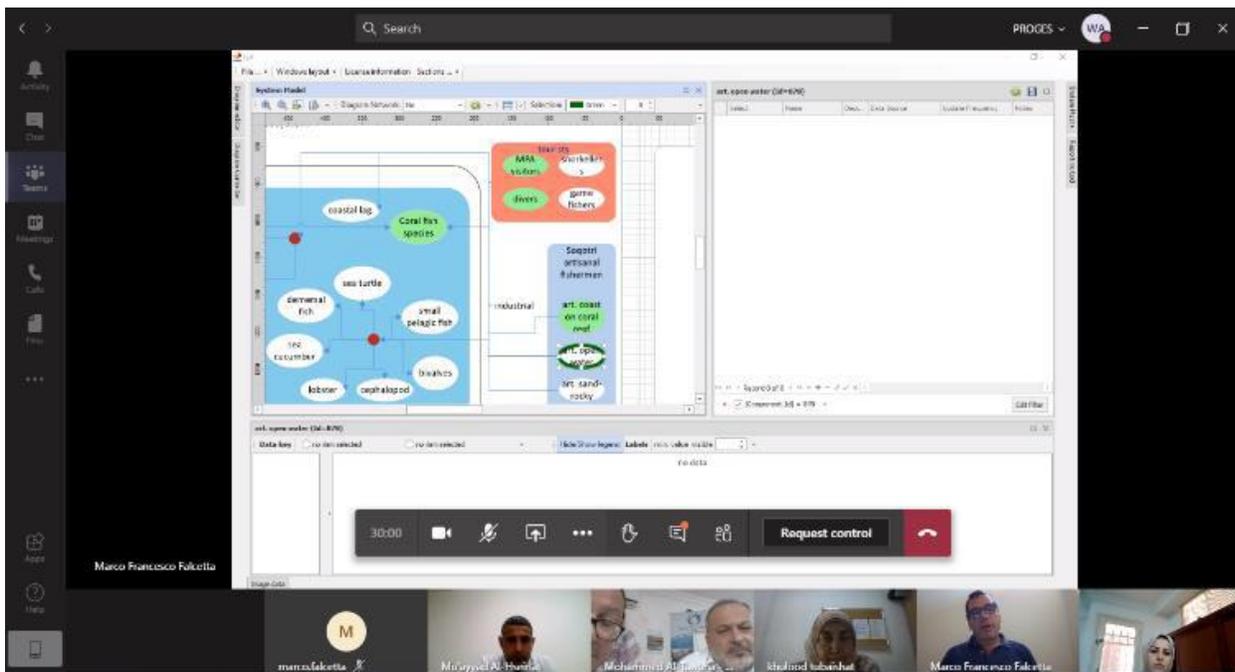


Figure 10: Screenshot of JREDS software "online training"



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report



Figure 11: Screenshot of INSTM software "online training"



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

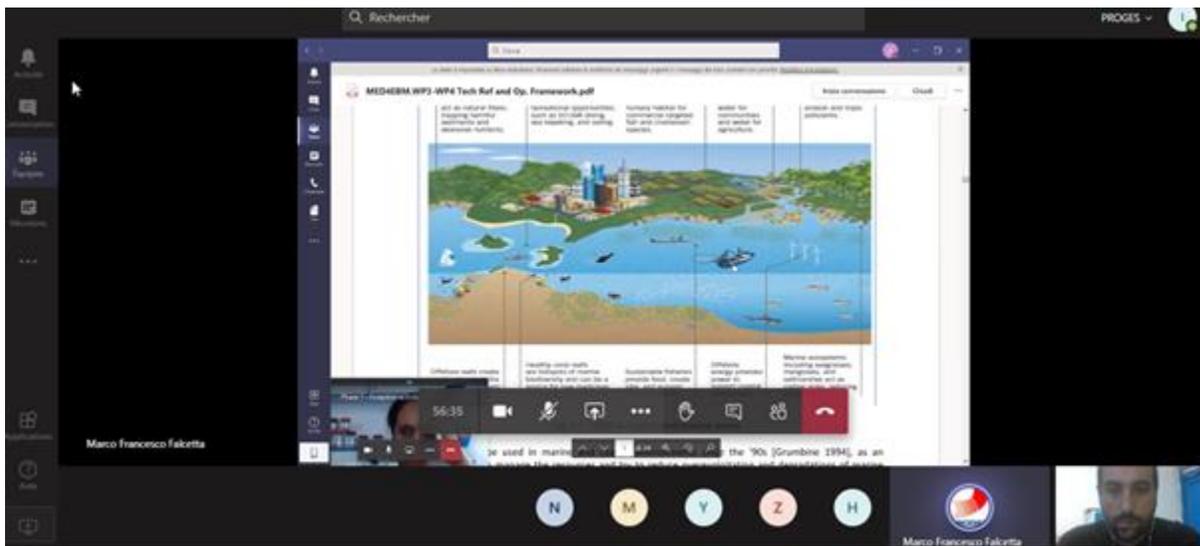


Figure 12: Screenshot of INSTM software "online training"



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

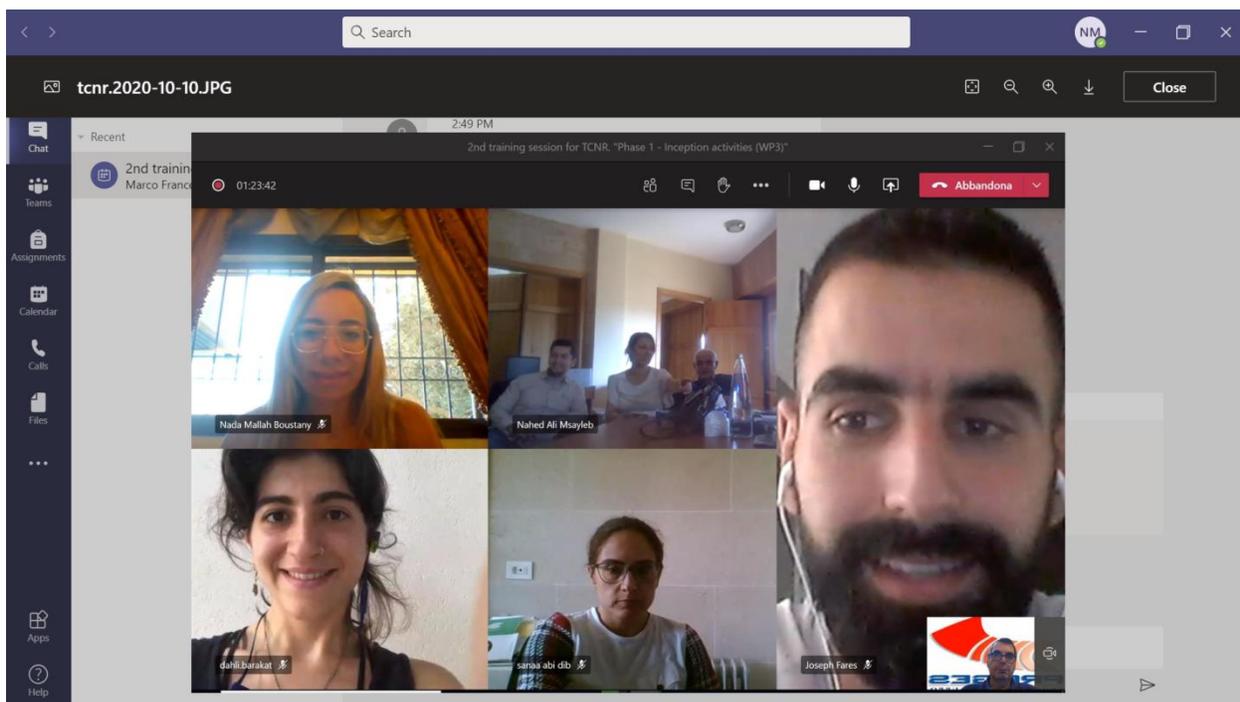


Figure 13: Screenshot of TCNR software "online training"

Design and Execution of Full-Fledged Training Packages

As part of the project activities, INSTM has conducted some activities related to training by the preparation and drafting of the following Training programs:

Training package 1

- Trainer: Dr. Nabil Soussi
- Institution: INSTM
- Expertise field: Participatory approach and soft Skills
- Training 1: Team building animation



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

- Training 2: Time management

Training package 2

- Trainer: Dr. Yessine Ben Arfa
- Institution: INSTM
- Expertise field: Fisheries economy and regulation
- Training 1: HUMAN DIMENSIONS AND THE INFORMATION SYSTEM IN THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO FISHERIES.
- Training 2: SUPPORT FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AEP (case of Kneiss Islands).
- Training 3: THE PARTICIPATORY APPROACH AND THE ROLE OF FISHERMEN IN THE MANAGEMENT OF FISHERIES AND THE MARINE ECOSYSTEM.

Risk and Constrains

The major risk encountered at the end of the reporting period was the COVID-19 which has constrained the implementation of on ground activities e.g. training, workshops, communication events. The project is trying to overcome such challenge by exploring the efficiency of the virtual training given the type of technical topics to cover, however, we shall proceed with virtual meetings and training for the time being until travelling is allowed and safety is guaranteed for all.

An additional risk was identified due to the instability with the bank system in Lebanon in which it affects the financial transactions with the Lebanese partner during the reporting period, such issue might occur again in the future and might affect the partnership with the Lebanese partner.

Due to the delay that occurred in the beginning of the project during the contract negotiation, the time allocated for activities was condensed and shortened in order to avoid any possible extensions on the project timeline, such condensing of the time might affect the results of the activities implemented. To avoid this risk, the possibility of an extension of MED4EBM implementation period may be considered.



MED4EBM – 1st Annual Report

Next year plan

In semester 3 MED4EBM will implement three workshops in each of its four target areas to actively involve all relevant ICZM actors and stakeholders in the development and implementation of EB-ICZM Decision Support Systems (EB-ICZM-DSSs) which will then be used to establish EB-ICZM governance Protocols (EB-ICZM-GPs). Thanks to MED4EBM innovative methods, during these workshops the said actors and stakeholders will not only be involved but will indeed be those directly developing the said EB-ICZM-DSSs and EB-ICZM-GPs.

With the view to start effectively and soon MED4EBM outputs dissemination process, the said workshops will be opened for participation to selected representatives of other relevant actors active in other countries of the ENI CBC MED Cooperation Area.

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, the said workshops will be executed using video-conferencing and remote-working tools.