

**ANNOTATED FORMAT FOR THE PRESENTATION
REPORTS FOR THE AREAS PROPOSED
FOR INCLUSION IN THE SPAMI LIST**

CABO DE GATA-NIJAR

SPAIN

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Annotated Format is to guide the Contracting Parties in producing reports of comparable contents, including the information necessary for the adequate evaluation of the conformity of the proposed site with the criteria set out in the Protocol and in its Annex I (Common criteria for the choice of protected marine and coastal areas that could be included in the SPAMI List).

CONTENTS

The presentation report shall include the following main information on: (i) identification of the proposed protected area (ii) site description (iii) its Mediterranean importance (iv) the activities in and around the area and their impacts (v) legal status (vi) management measures (vii) human and financial resources available for the management and the protection of the site.

SUBMISSION OF REPORTS

The reports should be submitted to the RAC/SPA two months before the meeting of National Focal Points for SPA in English or in French.

Dossiers should be compiled on A4 paper (210 mm x 297 mm), with maps and plans annexed on paper with a maximum size of an A3 paper (297 mm x 420 mm). Contracting Parties are also encouraged to submit the full text of the proposal in electronic form.

The requested annexes should be submitted on paper and, if possible, also in electronic form. They are the following:

- Copies of legal texts
- Copies of planning and management documents
- Maps: administrative boundaries, zoning, land tenure, land use, and distribution of habitats and species, as appropriate
- Existing inventories of plant and fauna species
- Photographs, slides, films/videos, CD-ROMs
- List of publications and copies of the main ones concerning the site

N.B.: All the following sections have to be in the report submitted, even those sections or elements that do not apply to the proposed area. Where that is the case, please put “not applicable to the proposed area”.

1. AREA IDENTIFICATION

1.1. COUNTRY/COUNTRIES (in the case of transboundary areas)

SPAIN

1.2. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVINCE OR REGION

ALMERIA (ANDALUSIA)

1.3. NAME OF THE AREA

CABO DE GATA - NIJAR

1.4. GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Describe its geographical boundaries, e.g. rivers, roads, geographical or administrative boundaries (do not describe the co-ordinates here; please make a separate annex with a map and a description of geographical co-ordinates as stated in the legal declaration of the area).

The Cabo de Gata – Nijar Natural Park is located in the southeastern limit of the province of Almeria, Spain. It covers a territory of 38,000 ha. and one nautical mile (12,000 ha.) starting from the coastline (about 45 km long). This is a coastal space with a volcanic origin and with a maximum altitude of 540 metres and a maximum water depth of –60 m. (see map 1).

The relief of the space is hilly in its interior and very abrupt on the coast, essentially with many cliffs, which has defined both the landscape and the use that man has been able to carry out traditionally in this territory.

The scarcity of precipitation in the area causes water sources that are generally temporary and torrential (ravines), which, together with very small paths, make up a hydric network of little importance, but with high energy, typical of the subdesert region where it is situated.

The motorway network is located fundamentally in the innermost portion, with the “Mediterranean Motorway” being the principal communication hub between the capital, Almeria, and the towns in the southeast of the peninsula. Stemming out from this hub there are several secondary roads that allow access to the different coastal populations, and even this space has not been communicated on its coastal side until very recently.

The space is made up by sections of three municipalities: Nijar, Carboneras and Almeria. The population residing here is around 3,700 spread out in small populations that do not exceed 400 inhabitants each.

1.5. SURFACE OF THE AREA (total)

49,547	(in national unit)	49,547	(in ha)
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1.6. LENGTH OF THE MAIN COAST (Km)

45 km

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (maximum 3 pages)

Cabo de Gata – Nijar is a natural space with extraordinary structural and biological complexity, since it extends from the ocean floor to coastal mountains of a volcanic origin, passing through wetlands and coastal areas. Additionally, it is found in a climatic context that is almost unique in Western Europe, with rather mild temperatures, absence of frosts and, overall, extreme aridity. The annual precipitation is 169 mm, with great irregularities (up to 93 mm in just one day) and a scarcity of rainy days, generally less than 30 per year. The fruit of this peculiar climatology and of the environmental variety of this space, there exists a magnificent variety of organisms in the interior adapted to the drought conditions, without a doubt unique in Spain and the European Union.

In the 49,625 ha of surface of the Park it is estimated that there are more than 1000 species that make up its flora, which is approximately 17% of the species that appear in the Iberian Peninsula and the Balearic Islands and 25% with respect to Andalusia. The flora is constituted for the most part by species from the southeast of the peninsula (53.1%), with 16.3% being Iberian species strictly speaking, 14.3 % are native to Almeria and 10.2 native to the Park.

With respect to the marine flora, The space presents a great added value due to the types of vegetation that develop and the related biodiversity. The soil types (rocky, sandy) and the diversity of their vegetative colonisation (algae and large surfaces covered by *Posidonia oceanica*) constitute the basis for a great richness of fauna. Of the species indicated in Annex II following the protocol for the designation of Specially Protected Areas in the Mediterranean (SPAMI), there are 3 found in the proposed zone.

With respect to marine fauna the catalogues made up to now contemplate an important community associated both with the soft, rocky soils, as well as with the pelagic species of fish and mammals. Of the species indicated in Annex II for the designation of areas SPAMI, there are 26 found in this proposed space.

Apart from this, and keeping in mind Annex I of the Habitats Directive 92/43/CEE, there exist 22 types of habitats, of which 5 are priority. With respect to the Bird Directive 79/409/CEE, 43 species from Annex I are present, of which 3 are priority.

Given the environmental importance of Cabo de Gata, The zone has been the object of multiple conservation efforts in the last few years. Additionally to its being declared as ZEPA and LIC, it has been declared a Natural Park, an Internationally Important Wetland (Ramsar) and Biosphere Reserve.

In addition it has initiated a natural Resource Organisation Plan and a Governing Plan for Use and Management (Decree 418 / 1994 in Andalusia), that zones and regulates all of the uses and activities permitted within the limits of the territory.

The fruit of the application of this normative is that the most problematic activities are being regulated by their environmental incidence such as tourism, intensive agriculture and, to a lesser extent illegal fishing.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1. TYPOLOGY OF THE SITE

3.1.1. Terrestrial surface, excluding wetlands (ha):		37,547
3.1.2. Wetland surface (ha):		0
3.1.3. Marine surface (Sq. Km):	Marine internal waters	434
	Territorial sea	12,000
	High sea	0

3.2. MAIN PHYSICAL FEATURES

3.2.1. Geology/Geomorphology

Give a brief description of: (i) geological aspects (lithologic and tectonics); (ii) processes of sedimentation and erosion observable in the area; (iii) coastal geomorphology and (iv) island system. Indicate bibliographical sources.

The landscape of the Cabo de Gata Natural Park is made up, from a geological point of view, of two large units: The abrupt neogenic mountains in a volcanic complex and the extensive sedimentary Quaternary flatlands of the Almeria Bay.

The Volcanic Complex of Cabo de Gata constitutes a small part of an ample volcanic province that currently extends submerged under the Alborán Sea, and that began to be generated about approximately 14 to 15 million years ago (in the Miocene). The volcanic activity, essentially underwater, stayed active until about 6.5 million years ago. The surface exit of the magma is associated with a great thinning in the earth's crust in the zone of the Alborán Sea produced after the continental collision of the great African and European plates, in the Alpine orogeny. The volcanic activity operated in various successive stages, among which the dismantling was produced, due to erosion, of the reliefs created by the volcanoes and the accumulation of marine sediments among volcanic rocks. Some volcanic edifices finally emerged as islands. In these cases the volcanic activity could have been explosive, originating great volcanic furnaces. The circulation of seawater through the rocks and the heat freed by the magma permitted the formation of hydrothermal fluids that altered the composition of the rocks generating exclusive mineral finds, such as the gold in Rodalquilar. During specific intervals the zone was configured as an extensive archipelago where the islands which emerged corresponded to volcanic domes, around which, in a warm, tropical sea, coral reefs developed in the form of atolls or coastal reefs, with a great scientific value today.

The particular geological formation enabled to formation of one of the most unique Volcanic Complexes in Europe, and without a doubt, one of the most important in continental Europe. A capricious geological landscape, with its own particular air, in which the tones that dominate are reds, ochres and blacks, that are not shy about showing an extensive range of volcanic rocks, with different types of composition, texture and structure. A natural museum, taking everything into account, with an enormous didactic and scientific interest.

Domes, volcanic taps (extracted slowly like a mantle), chimneys, furnaces and pyroclastic rocks (produced by brusque explosions that threw material that was later deposited in beds or layers due to the effect of gravity) are the most characteristic mechanisms of the formation of this rock complex. The lava covered the entire possible spectrum of chemical composition, from acidic rocks (very rich in quartz) to basic rocks, (low in quartz, such as basalt). Rocks that on occasion have rare and exclusive chemical compositions, almost unique in the world. The pyroclastic materials acquire the form of layers of different textures and granulation, cracks and agglomerated, bombs (the largest pyroclastic blocks, sometimes reaching metres in size), ashes (thus named because they are the finest pyroclastic material), etc. The structures are not less varied, with the most important being the magnificent examples of “disjunctive columnar” true hexagonal shaped vertical columns that are generated in the lava taps due to the sudden cooling of the lava.

The Messiniense Fossil Coral Complex constitutes, without a doubt, one of the points with the best register of this geological period in the Western Mediterranean, a key piece for the study of the oscillations during said period and to understand the processes of environmental deterioration that characterised the Mediterranean Messiniense. Developments such as the reefs of Mesa Roldán and the Molata constitute magnificent examples whose study permits the reconstruction of the paleogeographic and the paleobiologic eras of this sector in the Mediterranean Basin in this geological period.

The Almeria Bay in itself houses an exceptional register of the geological processes during the Quaternary and whose marks permit the reconstruction of the geological history of this sector of the coast and the processes that in this Era happened in the context of the Bética Mountains and along the Mediterranean basin. You can see recent forms pertaining to the morphogenetic marine domain (marine terraces and beaches – coastal expanse), mixed (delta flatlands and lagoons) and continental (alluvial cones, flood terraces, dunar complexes, and mountain bases).

Due to its world-wide scientific interest the system of fossil marine terraces in the mouth of the Amoladers ravine deserves special attention.

3.2.2. Other interesting physical features: Such as hydrodynamics, volcanic formations, caves, underwater formations, etc.

The ambience of the park offers, additionally, excellent conditions to observe the phenomena and natural processes of doubtless interest in the framework of Environmental Education:

The climatology and the water cycle in arid zones. The risk of inundation and floods.

Hydrogeology, over exploitation of aquifers and marine intrusion.

Erosive processes, soil degradation and the phenomena of desertification.

The coastal dynamic and the risks derived from it, etc.

3.2.3. Length of beaches (in Km), including islands:

a) Length of sandy beaches:

12

b) Length of pebble or stony beaches:

2

c) Length, height and depth of active sand-dunes:

12 / 0.02 / 0.005

3.3. FRESHWATER INPUTS

3.3.1. Mean annual precipitation (in mm)

169 mm of a torrential nature occurring in autumn and spring.

3.3.2. Main water courses (permanent and seasonal)

All of the watercourses have a marked seasonal and torrential character due to the location in the rainy season and the limited run off paths. Only the principal artery of the area, the Alías River, holds water from autumn to the end of spring. The rest of the secondary courses correspond to ravines, which are characterised by carrying water and large quantities of sediments during several hours after a rainfall. Among the most important ravine we can include: Rambla del Agua, Amoladeras, Morales, Pozo de los Frailes, El Cuervo, and La Palmerosa.

3.3.3. Estuarine areas: Existence and brief description

Not Applicable to the Proposed Area

3.3.4. Freshwater springs: Existence and brief description, including marine offsprings

Not Applicable to the Proposed Area

3.4. BIOLOGICAL FEATURES (B2, Annex I)

3.4.1. Habitats: A brief description of dominant marine and terrestrial habitats, on the basis of the habitat classifications adopted within the framework of MAP (and their coverage in ha)

Habitat Code	Habitat	Surface
5330	Thermo-Mediterranean and Pre-steppe Underbrush	5946
5220 *	Treelike <i>Zyziphus</i> Underbrush	1486
6220 *	Calcareous, Sandy Prairies	991
2230	Dunes with <i>Malcomietalia</i>	495
1120 *	Prairies of <i>Posidonia</i>	495
1210	Annual Vegetation over accumulated marine waste	495
1240	Cliffs with vegetation of the Mediterranean coasts with endemic <i>Limonium spp</i>	495
1410	Saline Mediterranean Pastures (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>)	495
1420	Thermo-Atlantic Mediterranean Haloplile Underbrush (<i>Sarcocornetea fruticosi</i>)	495
1430	Halo-nitrophile Underbrush (<i>Pegano-Salsoletea</i>)	495
1510 *	Saline Mediterranean Steppes (<i>Limonietalia</i>)	495
1520 *	Iberian Gypsicole Vegetation (<i>Gypsophiletalia</i>)	495
2110	Embryonic Mobile Dunes	495
1110	Sandbanks permanently covered by shallow water	495
92D0	Thermo-Mediterranean Galleries and Riverbed Underbrush (<i>Nerio-Tamariceta y Securinegion tinctoriae</i>)	495
2260	Dunes with <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i>	495
3250	Permanently Full Mediterranean Rivers with <i>Glaucium flavum</i>	495
3270	Riverbanks covered with vegetation of <i>Chenopodium rubri</i> and <i>Bidention</i>	495
6420	Mediterranean wetland high grass prairies (<i>Molinion-Holoschoenion</i>)	495
7220	Degraded High Peat Bogs that can still regenerate themselves naturally	495
8210	Calcareous Rocky Slopes with casmophitic vegetation	495
2120	Mobile Coastal Dunes with <i>Ammophila aneraria</i>	495

3.4.2. List of regionally important species (flora and fauna) (B-2a, Annex I)

List here ONLY those species protected by international agreements, particularly those marine species included in Annex II of the Protocol, which are present in the area. Any other species may be listed if it is clearly considered of regional importance given its high representation in the area. Display the species list under the headings Marine Plants, Terrestrial Plants, Marine Invertebrates, Fish, Amphibians and Reptiles, Birds, and Mammals. For each species state:

- its relative abundance as Common (C), Uncommon (U) or Occasional (O),
- Its global status as rare (r), endemic (e) and/or threatened (t), and
- its status as an important resident population (R), or important for its breeding (B), feeding (F), wintering (W) or migratory passage (M)

SPECIES	Rel. Abundance (C) (U) (O)	Global STATUS (r) (e) (t)	Local STATUS (R) (B) (F) (W) (M)
TERRESTRIAL PLANTS			
<i>Chaenorhinum charidemi</i>	(U)	(r) (e) (t)	
<i>Teucrium turredanum</i>	(U)	(r) (e) (t)	
<i>Helianthemum alypoides</i>	(U)	(r) (e) (t)	
MARINE PLANTS			
<i>Cystoseira mediterranea</i>	(C)	(r)(t)	
<i>Cystoseira spinosa</i>	(U)	(r) (t)	
<i>Posidonia oceanica</i>	(C)	(r)	
MARINE INVERTEBRATES			
<i>Astroides calycularis</i>	(C)	(r)(t)	
<i>Dendropoma petraeum</i>	(U)	(r) (t)	
<i>Erosaria spurca</i>	(O)	(r) (t)	
<i>Lithophaga lithophaga</i>	(U)	(r) (t)	
<i>Luria lurida</i>	(O)	(r) (t)	
<i>Pinna nobilis</i>	(U)	(r) (t)	
<i>Pinna rudis</i>	(O)	(r) (t)	
FISH			
<i>Hippocampus hippocampus</i>	(U)	(r) (t)	
<i>Hippocampus ramulosus</i>	(O)	(r) (t)	
REPTILES			
<i>Caretta caretta</i>	(O)	(r) (t)	(M) (B??)
<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>	(O)	(r) (t)	(M)
<i>Testudo graeca</i>	(O)	(r) (t)	(R)
<i>Mauremys leprosa</i>	(U)	(r) (t)	(R)
BIRDS			
<i>Larus audouini</i>	(C)	(r) (t)	(R)
<i>Hieraaetus fasciatus</i>	(U)	(r) (t)	(R)
<i>Calonectris diomedea</i>	(U)	(r) (t)	(R)
<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>	(U)	(r) (t)	(R)
<i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>	(C)	(r) (t)	(R)
<i>Sterna albifrons</i>	(U)	(r) (t)	(B)
<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	(U)	(r) (t)	(W)
MAMMALS			
<i>Delphinus delphis</i>	(U)	(r) (t)	(M) (F)
<i>Globicephala melaena</i>	(O)	(r) (t)	(M) (F)
<i>Orcinus orca</i>	(U)	(r) (t)	(M) (F)
<i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>	(O)	(r) (t)	(M) (F)
<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	(U)	(r) (t)	(M) (F)
<i>Ziphius cavirostris</i>	(U)	(r) (t)	(M) (F)

Besides this species there are some other species in the site that are protected as well for the EEC/409/79 Directive of birds, annex I, and EEC/43/92, Directive of Habitats, annex II and IV (see annex 1 “*Otras especies protegidas por la legislación europea*”)

3.4.3. Flora: Describe in a few sentences the main plant assemblages significant in the area.

The zone is found in the biological system of Murcia and Almeria, which, due to its characteristic climate and geology, is one of the most peculiar floral units in the entire Peninsula. The scarce annual rainfall is the principal factor that explains the abundance of ephemeral annual plants. Among the underbrush there appear some very singular elements in the European context such as *Zizuphus lotus*, *Periploca laevigata*, *Chamaerops humilis*, *Stipa tenacissima*, etc. and different endemic elements (8 species) within a catalogue of more than 1000 types belonging to 91 families.

In general, the flora is very influenced by the north of Africa, with the majority of the examples in the southeast peninsula (53.1%), being Iberian species in the strictest sense (16.3%), from Almeria (14.3%) and 10.2% endemic to the Natural Park.

With respect to marine flora, the principal species correspond to phanerogams of a great ecological interest such as *Posidonia oceanica* or *Cymodocea nodosa*, as well as the communities of brown and red algae with *Cystoseira mediterranea*, *C. spinosa*, *C. tamariscifolia*, *Lythophyllum incrustans*, *Janica rubens*, *Corallina granifera*, *Mesophyllum lichenoides*, *Spongites notarisii*, as the most representative species or indicators of quality.

3.4.4. Fauna: Describe in a few sentences, which are the main fauna populations present in the area.

The great diversity of fauna is presented in direct relation with the great quantity of environments in this space, with the most notable being the presence of the *Testudo graeca* and impressive bird communities associated with the steppe formations: *Chersophilus duponti*, *Pterocles alchata*, *Burhinus oedicephalus*, etc; *Phoenicopus ruber*, *Larus audouinii*, *Recurvirostra avosetta*, *Himantopus himantopus*, etc.

Other elements of interest such as the *Aethechinus algirus*, *Chalcides bedriagae*, *Bubo bubo*, *Hieraaetus fasciatus*, *Falco peregrinus*, form part of the great catalogue of vertebrates in this Park.

The studies carried out about insects in the Park speak of 31 elements that can be considered endemic to a more or less extent, with the most notable group being the coleopterans as the most represented.

Taking into account the marine fauna, the most notable are the communities on the soft, rocky sea floor in their distinct levels or bands (supra-, meso- and infra-coastal), though there also exist species that are live in the sea such as *Caretta caretta*, *Dermochelys coriacea* and the marine mammals *Tursiops truncatus*, *Delphinus delphi*, *Globicephala melaena*, *Orcinus orca*, *Stenella coeruleoalba*.

Among the sea floor communities there are some important species in danger of extinction or that have reduced de area such as *Spongia officinalis*, *Astroides calycularis*, *Cladocora caespitosa*, *Eunicella verrucosa*, *Patella nigra*, *Luria lurida*, *Erosaria spurca*, *Pinna nobilis*, *P. rudis*, *Lithophaga lithophaga*, *Octopus macropus*, *Spirographis spanllanzanii*, *Scyllarides latus*, *Eriphia verrucosa*, *Stenopus spinosus*, *Myriapora truncata*, *Sertella septentrionalis*, *Asterina gibbosa*, *Ophidiaster ophidianus*, *Halocynthia papillosa*, *Epinephelus guaza*, *E. alexandrinus*, *Scianena umbra*, *Balistes carolinensis*, among many other rare or of special interest species for their protection (see species annex).

3.5. HUMAN POPULATION AND USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES

3.5.1 Human population

a) Inhabitants inside the area:

	Number	Date of data
Permanent	3676	1996
Seasonal number (additional to permanent)	An estimated 12000 additional	1999

Description of the population

The population inside the space are to be found distributed throughout the entire Natural Park in small groups, with the majority of the workers and visitors in the main urban areas of Carboneras, Nijar and Almeria.

The main human presence in the space is produced in the summer months, though there exists a small influx of tourists in spring and autumn due to the pleasantness of the climate at these times of year.

Main human settlements and their populations

The principal towns and their populations are: San Miguel de Cabo de Gata 1234, San José 407, Pujaire 444, Agua Amarga 360, El Pozo de los Frailes 271, Fernán Pérez 232, Rodalquilar 128, Isleta del Moro 162, Las Negras 126, El Argamasón 139, El Saltador Alto y Bajo 91 and Cueva del Pájaro 82.

Near to the protected space we find Carboneras with 6312 inhabitants, Urbanización de Retamar 1034 and Nijar 15406. Almeria is 20 km away with 152930 inhabitants.

3.5.2 Current human use and development

a) Briefly describe the current use of the area by subsistence, artisan, commercial and recreational fishing, hunting, tourism, agriculture and other economic sectors.

The main uses of the zone correspond to tourism, particularly during summer, with the majority of the visitors coming from the nearby towns (Almeria, Carboneras, Nijar, etc.), with a very small number therefore spending the night within the Natural Park.

The second tier of economic output comes from agriculture, mainly of a traditional character and a large part for the subsistence of the interior population of the Natural Park.

Traditional fishing is in crisis, though there are still small ports in the towns of El Alquíán, San Miguel de Cabo de Gata, Agua Amarga, Isleta del Moro, Los Escullos and San José. The total number of boats is around 80, and additionally in this zone the large fishing organisations from Almeria and Carboneras also act, which raises the total to 280, of which 50 fish by dragging and the rest by casting.

Mining activities were very important in the past with the extraction of gold and lead. Currently this is restricted to just one mine of volcanic origin clay.

Cattle raising occupies currently a very secondary role in the economy of the zone, with the latest numbers calculating 51000 head of goats and sheep.

b) Enter how many of the users depend on these resources, seasonality, and assessment of the social and economic importance of their use and of the perceived impact on the conservation of the area, in a score of 0-1-2-3 (meaning null, low, medium, high).

ACTIVITY AND CATEGORY	ASSESS IMPORTANCE OF		Estimated No. of Users	Seasonality
	Socio-economic	Conserv. Impact		
FISHING				
Subsistence	1	1		
Commercial, local	2	2		
Commercial, non-local	0	0		
Controlled recreational	2	1		
Un-controlled recreational	1	1		
TOURISM				
Regulated	2	2		High High
Unregulated	1	1		
Indicate the type of tourism -..... -.....				
Tourism facilities				
FOREST PRODUCTS				
Subsistence	1	1		
Non-timber commercial, local	0	0		
Non-timber commercial, non-local	0	0		
Timber commercial, local	0	0		
Timber commercial, non-local	0	0		
Agriculture				
Stockbreeding	2	2		
Aquaculture	1	1		
EXTENSIVE STOCK GRAZING				
Subsistence	1	0		
Commercial, local	1	1		
Commercial, non-local	0	0		
OTHER ACTIVITIES				
-				
-				

3.5.3. Traditional economic or subsistence uses

Name any environmentally sound traditional activities integrated with nature, which support the well being of the local population. E.g. land, water use, target species, if closed seasons or closed zones are used as management techniques.

The majority of the traditional uses correspond to traditional subsistence agriculture. Fishing is located in small coastal villages carried out by small boats following traditional arts such as “rastros coquineros” (to capture clams), “la barrera” (for migratory fish), “el trasmallo” (for various fish and cephalopods). The cattle raising is traditional and not widespread due to the low productivity of vegetation in the area. In the last few decades a tendency has been observed of the diminishing number of shepherds dedicated to this activity.

4. MEDITERRANEAN IMPORTANCE OF THE SITE

This Section aims at stressing the importance of the site for conservation at the regional or global scales, as set in Art. 8 para. 2 of the Protocol and B2-a, B2-b and B2-c in Annex I.

4.1. PRESENCE OF ECOSYSTEMS/HABITATS SPECIFIC TO THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

Name the type of habitats considered of Mediterranean specificity, on the basis of the habitat classifications adopted within the framework of MAP, and their estimated cover (Ha).

Within the Natural Park there are typical Mediterranean habitats in a good state of conservation as are all those that correspond to underbrush and subdesert vegetation that develop in the soil of this space.

Other interesting habitats are those dunes and coastal beach formations that house typical Iberian and Northern African flora and fauna, as well as the saline formations where an important number of birds nest.

With respect to the marine communities one can find all the typical types of soil found in Mediterranean ecosystems, both on soft substrata (which are the predominate type) and in the others. The area is additionally interesting since it is found at the meeting point of the waters coming from the Spanish Levant region (running north – south) with the waters from the west (running west – east), which increments the number of conditions for the development of multiple species.

In a general context, the zone represents a very important point in the migration of birds from Europe to Africa, since the space is situated in one of the closest points between both continents, permitting rest and feeding before the big “jump”. In this sense, the good state of the marine habitats also permits rest and feeding of pelagic and migratory species of fish and marine reptiles, constituting a key point of the Mediterranean.

4.2. PRESENCE OF HABITATS THAT ARE CRITICAL TO ENDANGERED, THREATENED OR ENDEMIC SPECIES

A critical habitat is an area essential to the conservation of the species concerned. These species should be those included in Annex II of the Protocol. E.g. Islets and sea stacks, as small islands in the sea or in large bodies of water, mostly important for water-bird colonies; caves appropriate for monk seals; undisturbed sand beaches where marine turtle nesting occurs; coastal lagoons where threatened fish or bird species feed or breed; tidal flats, coastal or benthic substrates important for marine invertebrates, etc. Name the habitat types and the species linked to it.

Within the area there exist habitats and endemic species or those in danger of extinction with a rather significant representation.

In the catalogue of main species we can find those mentioned in the above section (section 3.4.2.), but there are many more (in particular inland) which are endemic or very rare elements, in some cases even unknown by a large part of the scientific community (species recently describes or rather those about which not much has been published).

With respect to the habitats, the surface area occupied by *Posidonia oceanica* is very important. To a lesser extent, the communities of brown algae and coral on hard substrata are also important.

Considered all together, the presence of species and habitats that are endemic or in danger are found in the Cabo de Gata – Nijar Natural Park due to the confluence of diverse environmental factors: subdesert climate, volcanic and Quaternary substrata, the coastal location with the influence of Alborán, moderated presence of human activity, etc.

All of this permits it to be said that this space is a unique site in the Mediterranean context for the singularity of its habitats and species that are developed there, both on land and in the sea.

4.3. OTHER RELEVANT FEATURES (Art. 8 paragraph 2 in the Protocol)

4.3.1. Educational Interest (B-3 in Annex I)

E.g. particular values for activities of environmental education or awareness

- Geological formations of volcanic complex
- Messiniense fossil reefs
- Tirreniense fossil marine beaches
- Saline lagoon systems
- Current and fossilised dune complexes
- Geomorphic coast with cliffs and islands
- Mining – industrial Archaeology
- Steppe terrestrial, subdesert and saline lagoon fauna
- Subdesert flora and vegetation with thorny underbrush, saline formations, underbrush on gypsum and communities on dunes and coastal reefs
- Coastal marine habitats on soft and hard ground

4.3.2. Scientific Interest (B-3 in Annex I)

Explain if the site represents a particular value for research in the field of natural or heritage sciences.

Same as the above point.

4.3.3. Aesthetic Interest (B-3 in Annex I)

Name and briefly describe any outstanding natural features, landscapes or seascapes.

The most notably characteristic about Cabo de Gata is its aridity. In spite of having basically uniform elevation, this land offers strong landscape contrasts, based on the following elements:

An exotic geological volcanic landscape with a proliferation of domes, furnaces and a natural museum of volcanic structures and textures, whose reddish colours give the landscape a character reminiscent of Africa.

A peculiar vegetation cover characterised by the general absence of tree mass but with an abundance of underbrush with a high aesthetic and ecological value. Palm groves and Mediterranean gardens contribute traits of exoticism and diversity to the landscape.

The aridity and general absence of continental water, but with punctual concentrations in spaces with a high landscape value such as Salinas – Albufera and a multitude of small oasis. The characteristic landscape of the ravines makes up lines of humidity with a few particular landscape connotations.

Its marine character: cliffs and beaches. The contact between land and sea is one of the most meaningful elements of this landscape. Sometimes this contact happens in an aggressive and brusque way thus forming impressive cliffs such as those at Cabo de Gata or San Pedro, where the mountain enters brusquely in contact with the sea, sometimes creating whimsical pseudoreefs (Dedo Reef and Sirena Reef) and a variety of small islands. On other occasions the union of both elements is much smoother, forming extensive beaches and small deserted coves, giving of a natural, rustic character which makes them special to the coast. Together with them, fishing communities of a singular beauty (Agua Amarga, Las Negras, La Isleta, Los Escullos, etc.)

Dune landscapes. The extensive dunar lands of the Almeria Bay constitute an important element in the landscape, because they are formations that are not very frequent on the Peninsula, characterised by being spectacular and frequently amazing the first time observer.

4.3.3 Aesthetic Interest (**Continuación**)

The traditional Mediterranean garden. In spite of the aridity that characterises Cabo de Gata, it has always been populated and its lands have been used, and the evidence has been left behind in the disperse buildings that can be seen, some are residential (farmhouses), used in farming, or cattle raising, etc. Thus the Park contains a significant number of traditional rural edifications that make up, without a doubt, and inseparable part of the landscape.

The rich and varied cultural heritage, with a variety of towers, Arabic forts, coastal defence castles, ethnic elements related with water, waterwheels, mills, irrigation canals, etc. All these things make up another interesting trait of the landscape.

4.3.4. Main cultural features

Indicate if the area has a high representative value with respect to the cultural heritage, due to the existence of environmentally sound traditional activities integrated with nature which support the well-being of local populations.

- Mining Exploitations with archaeological interest from Phoenician and Roman times.
- Factory installations from Roman times used in the manufacturing of salted meats and dyes in Torre García.
- A multitude of elements of ethnographic interest from the Arabic Epoch (XI-XVI centuries) related with water: waterwheels, mills, reservoirs, irrigation canals, etc., as well as guard towers.
- Coastal defence towers from the XVIII century in Los Escullos, Rodalquilar and other places.
- A great richness in anthropological and ethnographic heritage related with the rural agro-fishing culture of the XIX century and the first half of the XX century.
- Inactive mining complexes of great archeo-industrial importance (gold wash basing in Rodalquilar and the mineral boat dock in Agua Amarga).

5. IMPACTS AND ACTIVITIES AFFECTING THE AREA

5.1. IMPACTS AND ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE SITE

5.1.1. Exploitation of natural resources

Assess if the current rates of exploitation of natural resources within the area (sand, water and mineral exploitation, wood gathering, fishing, grazing...) are deemed unsustainable in quality or quantity, and try to quantify these threats, e.g. the percentage of the area under threat, or any known increase in extraction rates.

The main exploitation of natural resources is the commercial fishing industry with 280 small scale boats (between 3 and 9 metres long), and of these 80 are of a traditional style.

In the past the mining activity has been important here, but currently there is only one exploitation of clay.

5.1.2. Threats to habitats and species

Mention any serious threats to marine or coastal habitats (e.g. modification, desiccation, disturbance, pollution) or to species (e.g. disturbance, poaching, introduced alien species...) within the area.

Right now there are not any serious threats to the inhabitants of the Natural Park.

The marine medium does not have any pollution due to spills of untreated water, with its only threats being illegal underwater fishing and the dragging that destroys the sea floor ecosystems.

5.1.3. Demand by an increased population and infrastructures

Assess whether the current human presence or an expected increase in frequentation (tourism, passage of vehicles and boats) and any human immigration into the area, or plans to build infrastructures, are considered a threat.

For the last few decades there has existed a demand in residential soil that has been controlled by the regulations of the Natural Park, avoiding the growth of current villages. Nevertheless, there has been an increase in the number of visitors than before to the interior of the space, who use the peripheral towns to stay in. Associated with these visits there has also been an increment of traffic along the principal lines of communication, as well as ecological tourism along the footpaths set up in the interior of the Park. Inside the zone there is only one port used for sporting purposes, San José, where the boat traffic is moderate.

5.1.4. Historic and current conflicts

Make a brief statement of any historic or current conflicts between users or user groups.

The most relevant historic conflicts originate from the regulation in the Natural Park that prohibits the transformation of underbrush and traditional cultivations into intensive greenhouse cultivation.

Currently the most relevant conflicts come from the touristic use due to the accumulation of vehicles in zones close to the beaches.

Aside from this, the construction of illegal individual houses, which deteriorate the landscape until there is a legal sentence to eliminate them.

5.2. IMPACTS AND ACTIVITIES AROUND THE SITE

In Art.7.2-e the Protocol calls for the regulation of activities compatible with the objectives for which a SPA was declared, such as those likely to harm or disturb species or ecosystems (Art.6.h), while Section B4 in Annex I asks to consider “the existence of threats likely to impair the ecological, biological, aesthetic or cultural value of the area” (B4-a in Annex I), recommending the existence, in the area and its surroundings, of opportunities for sustainable development (B4-d) and of an integrated coastal management plan (B4-e).

5.2.1. Pollution

Name any point and non-point sources of external pollution in nearby areas, including solid waste, and especially those affecting waters up-current.

According to the *Inventory of spilled liquids on the Andalusian Coast* the population that exists in the zone due to spillage is presented in the following points:

- In the western portion of the Natural Park, and bordering with the natural space, there is one landfill with underwater water emissions of urban residential water coming from the Retamar neighbourhood. Currently a water purifier is being built for these residential waters.
- In the northern part of the Natural Park, in the town of Carboneras, the residents dump their waste water resulting in an underwater emission.
- There also exists an industrial park near Carboneras with two private ports and landfills, which for now are not excessively contaminating (refrigeration water mixed with salt water). Nevertheless, the existence of the ports carries with it a multitude of dockings of large scale boats and the pollution more or less diffused associated with said traffic.
- Associated with the above mentioned ports, there exists a fish farm that carries out controlled spilling of sea water.

Though these spills take place outside the protected space, there do take place very close to its limits, being able to affect in a more or less diffuse way if they are carried along by the marine currents.

Briefly describe any other external threat to the ecological, biological, aesthetic or cultural values of the area (such as unregulated exploitation of natural resources, serious threats on habitats or species, increase of human presence, significant impacts on landscapes and cultural values, pollution problems, any sectorial development plans and proposed projects, etc.), likely to influence the area in question.

The province of Almeria is one of the Spanish regions that has experimented a larger growth both economically and in population in the last few decades due to, fundamentally, the massive implantation of the out of season greenhouse agriculture and tourism. Due to the special climatic conditions of the region, these cultivations are very competitive in the European context since the harvests are the earliest on the continent. This rapid economic growth has also had negative effects, both from an environmental point of view (saline contents of aquifers, contamination of water and land, problems in elimination of large quantities of plastic, etc) and social (difficulty in the integration of the great influx of immigrants, social inequality).

This problem in the change of use of intensive agricultural zones is presented in large part in the areas that border the space, not affecting the Natural Park because this activity is prohibited in the interior of the space.

5.2.3. Sustainable development measures

Comment whether the area is covered by an integrated coastal management plan, or bordering upon a zone under such a plan. Are there other opportunities for sustainable development provided for in the neighbouring areas?

Currently, the Sustainable Development Plan for the Natural Park is in the panning phase as ordered by the environmental authorities (Regional Environmental Ministry).
(see annex 2 with the legal texts).

6. EXPECTED DEVELOPMENT AND TRENDS¹

The foreseeable development and trends of the site do not appear in the list of common criteria for the choice of protected marine and coastal areas that could be included in the SPAMI list, as established in the Protocol and its Annex I. Moreover, this is not always easy to assess and it is necessary to have knowledge about the site, which is not always available to all managers of protected areas; Thus, it is not obligatory to fill in the boxes in this Section 6.

On the other hand, the assessment of this foreseeable evolution and trends constitutes a dynamic supplement to the static knowledge of the site, as it appears in Sections 3, 4 and 5 above. Moreover, it is of significant importance for the definition of the objectives and the management plan of the site.

It thus appears desirable to bringing out the main outlines at least in respect to the following points:

6.1. EXPECTED DEVELOPMENT AND TRENDS OF THREATS TO AND PRESSURES UPON THE AREA

Deal briefly in succession with:

- The demographic development in and around the site
- The development of economic activities (other than tourism and recreation) within the area
- The development of local demand on tourism and recreation
- The development of tourism pressure on the area

In general outside the area, both the demographic growth and the touristic development tend in the last few decades to increment in the main population centres, with a decrease in the growth of small villages and isolated rural constructions. This effect increases the closer to the seashore the city is located.

Within the space the tendency is similar, with the exception that there are no important towns so that the growth and all the environmental problems have been moved towards the exterior perimeter zones, which serve as the start off point for visits within the space.

In general, given the quality of the water, the state of conservation of the ecosystem and the ethnographic richness of the zone, the population of the province of Almeria take advantage of this space as their first choice for touristic visits, though if only for short periods of time. For this reason there are emblematic zones with a significant concentration of people that could cause problems in the future if the number of visitors increments significantly. At certain times there exist problems of agglomerations of people during the traditional pilgrimage and other religious processions, without there being significant problems when it comes to cleaning up and organising these events.

6.2. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS IN THE AREA

Make a brief statement of potential use conflicts between the users or group of users of the site.

There is the potential of problems coming up is there is an important increment in the visiting population. There could also be problems in the transformation of the current cultivations to those that are less respectful of the environment.

6.3. EXPECTED DEVELOPMENT AND TRENDS OF THE NATURAL LAND ENVIRONMENT AND LANDSCAPES OF THE AREA: as expected arising from the evolution of the pressures

In spite of the fact that there exist tendencies for a disperse development of diverse activities (construction, isolated houses, moderate increment in some urban centres, etc.), the regulation that governs the Plan of use and Management does not permit there to be important impact on the environment that are related with the use of the soil, since there is a rather restrictive regulation, that has become the urbanistic rule of the cities.

For this reason it is expected that the predictions of impact and threats do not come to pass.

In spite of everything, there are some Municipal Authorities that are considering promoting the development of urban soils for touristic use.

6.4. EXPECTED DEVELOPMENT AND TRENDS OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT AND SEASCAPES OF THE AREA: as expected arising from the evolution of the pressures

As in the case of the land medium, the regulations of permitted and not permitted uses guarantee the integrity of the marine ecosystems.

Nevertheless, dangers exist derived from uncontrolled fishing that could reduce the natural populations. Because of this the vigilance has been incremented by the corresponding authorities and overall artificial reefs have been introduced to totally eliminate the practise of drag fishing.

7. PROTECTION REGIME

7.1. LEGAL STATUS (General Principles “e” and Section C-2 both in Annex I)

7.1.1. Historical background of the protection of the site

First off the area was included as a *Place of Special Interest* within the *Special Protection Plan of the Physical Environment and Catalogue of the Province of Almeria*, that was approved by the Andalusian Urbanistic Commission in 1987. This assigned the space a regimen of severe protection.

Shortly after the zone was declared as a Natural Park in December 1987. Later it has been declared as a Special Protected Area for birds (ZEPA) in October 1989 and declared as a Biosphere Reserve in December 1997(see map 2). Lastly it was proposed as a Place of Community Interest (LIC) in January 1998.

Additionally, the marine portion of the proposed area was declared in July 1995 as a Marine Reserve by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fishing and Food.

Whatsmore, part of the space, corresponding to the Saline Area was declared a Wetland of International Importance (Ramsar) in May 1990.

7.1.2. Legal texts currently ruling the protection on the site

Enter the national conservation category, the dates and the present enforcement status of the legal instrument declaring the protection of the area. Consider both the land and the marine areas of the site. Include the full text(s) as an annex.

The basic legal text corresponds to law 4/1989 from the 27 of March in Andalusia of *Conservation of the Natural Spaces and of the wild flora and fauna*, and the law 2/1989 from the 18 of July, from which was passed the *Inventory of Natural Protected Spaces in Andalusia*.

With the space declared a Natural Park, and in the framework of the anterior laws, Decree 418/1994 is passed from the 25 of October in Andalusia, that contains the *Natural Resources Organisational Plan (PORN)* and the *Governing Use and Management Plan (PRUG)*, that includes both the land and sea portions (see annex 3 with the legal texts).

Apart from this, the marine part has the category of Marine Reserve starting from the *Order of the 3 of July 1995 which establishes the Cabo de Gata-Níja Marine Reserve*, later modified by *Order from the 11 of Mayo2001*, that modified article 4 of the previous order.

7.1.3. Objectives (General Principles “a” and D-1 in Annex I)

Name in order of importance the objectives of the area as stated in its legal declaration.

The principal objectives of *PORN* and *PRUG* are the following (for more details see title I, chapter I, article 4):

- To protect the land and sea ecosystems of special ecological interest and the species in danger of extinction or that are vulnerable.
- To maintain the land and sea ecosystems to guarantee biological diversity
- To restore and regenerate the degraded natural land and marine ecosystems
- To establish limitations for the uses of the soils and water and sea floor, in such a way that each use takes into consideration their biological potential and productive capacity.
- To make compatible the social use of the land and sea environments with the conservation of the resources that they house.

7.1.3 (continuation):

- To control and if the case may be avoid the creation of new population centres and to improve, based on environmental criteria, the growth of those already in existence.
- To facilitate the generation of the socio-economic conditions that inhibit the development of the rural and fishing communities, favouring their progress.

With respect with what the Spanish Government formulates about the marine Reserve, establishing among its objectives the conservation of the marine resources and, especially, those that are the object of fishing exploitation.

7.1.4. Indicate whether the national protection regime arises from international treaties enforced or from implementation measures of treaties (Art. 6.a in the Protocol).

The regimen of national protection is bound to the implementation of the measures of the following treaties and international agreements:

- Agreement related to the Wetlands of International Importance (RAMSAR), applied to the salt lands of Cabo de Gata.
- Agreement of Barcelona, applied to the entire space.
- Biosphere Reserve applied to the entire space.
- List of Geoparks (UNESCO) applied to the entire space.

7.2. INTERNATIONAL STATUS

7.2.1. Transboundary or high seas areas

Complete this section only if the area is transboundary, totally or partially in the high sea, or within areas where the limits of national sovereignty or jurisdiction have not yet been defined. In this case, mention the modalities of the consultation (Art. 9 para. 3A in the Protocol and General Principles "d" in Annex I).

Not Applicable to the Proposed Area

7.2.2. International category

Mention if the area, or part of it, has been designated and on what date, with an international conservation category (e.g. Specially Protected Area, Biosphere Reserve, Ramsar Site, World Heritage Site, European Diploma, Natura 2000, Emerald network, etc.).

- Biosphere Reserve in December 1997
- Part of the space, corresponding to the salt lands was declared as Wetland of International Importance (Ramsar) in May 1990.
- Proposed as a Place of Community Interest in January 1998.

7.3. PREVIOUS LEGAL BACKGROUND AND LAND TENURE ISSUES

Briefly mention if the area or part of it is subject to any legal claim, or to any file open in that connection within the framework of an international body. Describe the land tenure regimes within the area, and append a map if existing.

The majority of the territory is private property, but an important proportion of the territory is of public ownership (see map 3).

7.4. LEGAL PROVISIONS FOR MANAGEMENT (Section D-1 in Annex I)

7.4.1. Zoning

Briefly state if the legal text protecting the area provides for different zones to allocate different management objectives of the area (e.g. core and scientific zones in both land and sea, fishing zones, visitation, gathering, restoration zones etc) and in this case the surface area in ha of these zones. Include a map as an annex

A) The zoning prospect for the Natural Park is detailed in map 4 adjoining, and takes into account the following zones:

Land:

Grade A Zones: includes spaces that are very well conserved, without any or very limited anthropic transformations or anthropic zones that are very naturalised of exceptional ecological value. The objectives are the conservation of their use, scientific research and superior didactic practice (controlled).

Grade B Zones: includes areas which without a doubt have ecological, scientific, cultural or landscape value where a certain grade of anthropic activity exists due to having carried out some type of primary use (hunting, cattle raising, traditional agriculture, etc.) that is compatible with the conservation of the medium.

Grade C Zones: includes natural or seminatural areas of general interest where the anthropic action is significant. Within this zone there are two categories: C1 for colonising vegetation in recuperation and C2 for traditional cultivation.

Grade D Zones: these are areas without significant environmental value product where the anthropic activities originated in the past. It is subdivided into category D1 for urban area, D2 for possible urban areas, D3 for intensive cultivation, D4 for mining exploitations and D5 for lesser urban entities.

Sea:

Grade A Zones: includes spaces with very well conserved sea floor. The objectives are the conservation of the marine resources, prohibiting all types of fishing, and even transit and anchoring of boats.

Grade B Zones: includes the rest of the protected marine area, and its objectives are the same as those of Zone A, except that sport fishing is permitted in certain points, as well as shellfish fishing and commercial fishing controlled according to the traditional arts.

B) The zoning that is established in the Marine Reserve is the same as in the Natural Park, with the exterior and interior boundaries coinciding. In said zoning there are two types of zones:

Integral Reserve, where all types of fishing, extraction of flora or fauna and all underwater activities are prohibited. Scientific sampling authorised by the Secretary of Fishing is permitted. Its boundaries coincide exactly with the grade A marine zones of the Natural Park.

Marine Reserve, where the only types of fishing allowed are with nets, and then only when the characteristics and regulations of this type of fishing in the Mediterranean are followed. Underwater activities are permitted, but without instruments that might be used for fishing. Sampling of flora and fauna are also admitted when authorised by the Secretary of Fishing. This zoning coincides exactly with the marine mile designed in the zoning of the Natural Park.

7.4.2. Basic regulations

Mention the provisions, which apply to the area concerning the implementation of Article 6 of the Protocol (paragraphs a to i), Section D5 (a to d) in the Annex I and Article 17 of the Protocol.

The Natural Park Use and Management Plan regulates according to the zones described above the types of activities permitted and prohibited, with the distinct zones (in particular the reserves and places of greater importance) under the protection and vigilance of the authorities of the Natural Park.

Among these norms is included one about transit and docking of boats, as well as the prohibition of the destruction, hunting or fishing of any plant or animal that develops in the especially protected zones (reserve zones).

Additionally, within the Natural Resource Organisational Plan, the main objective is designated as the elimination of the introduced species. (see in annex 3, the legal PORN and PRUG texts).

With regards to the activities permitted by the Marine Reserve, its regulation established concessions and prohibitions similar to those of PRUG (see section 7.4.1. above).

With respect to the regulation of solid wastes there exists a system of gathering and recycling managed by the Regional Environmental Ministry that moves the wastes to the closest centres in the capital (Almeria), where these residuals are treated adequately to avoid their impacting the environment.

7.4.3. Legal competencies

Section D4 in Annex I states that the competence and responsibility with regard to administration and implementation of conservation measures for areas proposed for inclusion in the SPAMI List must be clearly defined in the texts governing each area. Additionally Art.7.4. of the Protocol calls for the provision of clear competencies and co-ordination between national land and sea authorities, with a view to ensuring the appropriate administration and management of the protected area as a whole. Mention in which way do the legal provisions clearly establish the institutional competencies and responsibilities for the administration and conservation of the area, and if being the case, their co-ordination means, including those between land and sea authorities.

The responsibility for the land space corresponds entirely to the Environmental Ministry of the Regional Autonomous Government of Andalusia.

With regards to the responsibility for the marine part, these are shared among :

- The Land-Sea Public Domain (coastline and the portion of the land nearby) is attributed to the Ministry of the Environment (Directorate-General of Coasts), in anything relative to the use of the space.
- The territory that makes up the *interior waters*, near to the coast, is the responsibility of the Environmental Ministry of the Regional Andalusian Government in anything having to do with marine biological resources.
- The territory that includes the *exterior waters*, is the responsibility of the ministry of Agriculture, Fishing and Food, with regards to fishing and its protection.

Nevertheless, guarding the Natural Park includes boats for the vigilance and control of the marine mile included in the protected space.

The vigilance from shore also supposes an important element of control, given the inaccessibility from land of the coast of this space, not permitting the entrance of vehicles to the majority of the beaches.

7.4.4. Other legal provisions

Describe any other relevant legal provisions, such as those requiring a management plan, the establishment of a local participation body, binding measures for other institutions or economic sectors present in the area, allocation of financial resources and tools, or any other significant measures concerning the protection and management of the area or its surrounding zones.

The urbanistic regulation of the municipalities affected by the boundaries of the Natural Park have incorporated the rules and specifications set forth by the Natural Resource Organisation Plan and the Governing Plan for Use and Management. Therefore the municipal authorities control the technical specifications about any activity that is carried out in the territory, in particular those referent to construction, technical characteristics about the interior and exterior installations in houses, businesses, etc., basic electrical, telephone, communication, sanitation installations, etc.

8. MANAGEMENT

Through the General Principles, para. (e) in the Annex I, the Parties agree that the sites included in the SPAMI List are intended to have a value as examples and models for the protection of the natural heritage of the region. To this end, the Parties ensure that sites included in the List are provided with adequate legal status, protection measures and management methods and means.

8.1. INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

8.1.1. Authority/Authorities responsible for the area

- Land Portion: Environmental Ministry of the Andalusian Regional Government (autonomous government)
- Marine Portion:
 1. Land-Sea Public Domain: Spanish Ministry of the Environment Directorate-General of Coasts)
 2. Part near the shore (*interior waters*): Environmental Ministry of the Andalusian Regional Government
 3. Part far from the shore (*exterior waters*): Ministry of Agriculture, Fishing and Food.

8.1.2. Other participants in the management body

Such as other national or local institutions, as stated in Section D6 in Annex I.

The principal managing organism is the Governing Board of the Natural Park, which includes representatives of all the social sectors found in the zone, such as the town hall of each of the affected villages and towns and representatives of other autonomous institutions (government, universities, etc.), farmers, fishermen, sports associations, associations of neighbours, etc. (see Title I, Chapter I, article 7 of the Governing Plan of Use and Management).

The function of this Governing Board is the co-ordination among the Public Administrations and the collaboration of the citizens in the conservation of the protected space.

It also exist the Provincial Council for Environment, and the Provincial Council for Forest and Hunting.

8.1.3. Participants in other committees or bodies

Such as a scientific committee, or a body of representatives from the local stakeholders, the public, professional and non-governmental sectors, as in Sections B4-b and B4-c in Annex I.

(See what has been said about Governing Board of the Natural Park in point 8.1.2.)

8.1.4. Effectiveness

As stated in Section B4 of Annex I, assess as very low, low, moderate, satisfactory, very satisfactory, and comment as needed on the following aspects:

- a) Effectiveness of the co-ordination, where existing:

The co-ordination is satisfactory.

- b) Quality of involvement by the public, local communities, economic sectors, scientific community:

The grade of implication is moderate in the management.

8.2. MANAGEMENT PLAN (as set out in D7 of Annex I)

8.2.1. Management Plan

State if there is a management plan (MP) and in this case include the document as an annex. In the absence of a MP, mention if the main provisions governing the area and the main regulations for its protection are already in place and how (D7 in Annex I) and if the area will have a detailed management plan within three years (D7 in Annex I).

The regulation approved under the Natural Resources Organisation Plan and the Governing Plan for use and Management is permitting managing of the natural resources and a regulation of the activities of the Natural Park. The regulation is being applied in the space since it was passed in 1994.

Aside from this, the Environmental Ministry of the Regional Andalusian Government is carrying out individual programmes in relation with education and awareness of the value of nature, scientific collaboration for the study of sensible zones and protected species, and organises one-day and multi-day courses for the training of environmental monitors.

This entire group of measures will be completed in the near future when the composition of the Sustainable Development Plan is finished, which contains in greater detail the most important aspects in the development of the activities to be carried out in the natural space.

8.2.2. Formulation and approval of the Management Plan

Mention how the MP was formulated, e.g. by an expert team and/or under consultation and/or participation with other institutions or stakeholders. State the legal status of the MP, whether it is officialized, and how, and if it is binding for other institutions and sectors involved in the area.

The Natural Resources Organisation Plan and the Governing Plan for Uses and Management were first developed by a group of multidisciplinary specialists. Afterwards, the plans were revised by technicians of the environmental administration of Andalusia and, finally, they were revised including the criteria adopted by the distinct social elements implicated in the Governing Board of the Natural Park.

Once agreed upon, the text was sent to the Andalusian Government Parliament and passed as a legal text by Decree 418/1994 on the 25 of October.

8.2.3. Contents and application of the Management Plan

State the degree of detail in the MP by entering YES or NO in the following list of potential contents, and assess the degree of implementation of the MP by using the 0-1-2-3 score on the right hand side:

	Existing in MP	Degree of application
Detailed management objectives	YES	3
Zoning	YES	3
Regulations for each zone	YES	3
Governing body(ies)	YES	3
Management programmes as:		
Administration	YES	3
Protection	YES	3
Natural resource management	YES	3
Tourism and Visitation	YES	3

Education and Training	YES	3
Research and Monitoring	YES	3
Services and Concessions	YES	3
Fund raising activities	YES	3
Periodic revisions of the MP	YES	3

8.3. PROTECTION MEASURES

By Art. 6 of the Protocol the Parties agree to take all the necessary protection measures required for the conservation of the area, particularly the strengthening the application of the other Protocols to the Convention, and through the regulation of any other activity likely to harm the natural or cultural value of the area, such as economic, recreation or research activities. As per Section D2 in Annex I, the protection measures must be adequate to the site objectives in the short and long term, and take in particular into account the threats upon it.

8.3.1. Boundaries and signing

Briefly, state if the boundaries of the area and its zones are adequately marked in the field, both on land, in the sea, and at the principal points of access.

Currently signs are placed at all points on land accessible by vehicles, and also perimeter boundary. There are signs, as well, along the marine borders.

8.3.2. Institutional Collaboration

Name the different national and local institutions or organisations with legal responsibilities or involved in the protection and surveillance of land and sea zones, and any measures or mechanisms through which their co-ordination is pursued.

The legal responsibility for the land portion of the space corresponds entirely to the Environmental Ministry of the Andalusian Regional Government (Autonomous Government). The responsibility of the marine portion is shared :

- The coastal limit and the land nearest the shore (Land-Sea Public Domain) corresponds to the Spanish Ministry of the Environment (Directorate-General of Coasts) in what is related to the use of the space.
- The territory that includes the *interior water*, nearest to the coast, is the responsibility of the Environmental Ministry of the Andalusian Regional Government
- The territory that includes the *exterior water*, is the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fishing and Food, when referring to fishing and its protection.

8.3.3. Surveillance

Consider the adequacy of the existing protection means (human and material), and your present ability to survey land and sea uses and accesses

Currently the guard system of the Natural Park seems sufficient to maintain the land portion of the area under surveillance, particularly for the control that is carried out at the main access points. At sea there is permanent vigilance, though it is necessary to increase the number of personnel and equipment.

8.3.4. Enforcement

Briefly, consider the adequacy of existing penalties and powers for effective enforcement of regulations, whether the existing sanctions can be considered sufficient to dissuade infractions, and if the field staff is empowered to impose sanctions.

The sanctions are enough to dissuade the people. The Natural Park's guard system has the capacity to fine those persons that carry out environmental infractions or that do not follow the rules of each zone.

9. AVAILABLE RESOURCES

9.1. HUMAN RESOURCES (Art. 7.2.f in the Protocol)

9.1.1. Available staff

Assess the adequacy of the human resources available to the management body, in number of employees and training level, both in central headquarters and in the field. Indicate if there are staff training programmes.

The existing personnel in the central offices is adequate for the objectives of protection and conservation of the resources. The number of guards is the minimum necessary to comply with the objectives.

9.1.2. Permanent field staff

Answer YES or NO on the current existence of the following FIELD staff categories. If YES, enter the number of staff either permanent or part-time in that category, and evaluate on a 0-1-2-3 score (0 is low, 3 is high) the adequacy of their training level.

	YES/NO	NUMBER Permanent/Part-time	ADEQUACY OF TRAINING LEVEL
Field Administrator	YES	Permanent 1	3
Field Experts (scientific monitoring)	YES	Part-time 2	1
Field Technicians (maintenance, etc)	YES	Permanent 3	2
Wardens	YES	Permanent 5	2
Of which marine wardens	YES	Permanent 1	1
Guides	YES	Permanent 1	1
Other	NO	--	0

9.1.3. Additional Support

Briefly, describe if the area currently has the advantage of other external human resources in support of its objectives, either from other national or local institutions, volunteer programmes, non-governmental organisations, academic or international organisations. Mention if there are any significant changes in prospect for the near future.

The Natural Park benefits from technical support and information from the Central Services from the Regional Environmental Ministry located in Seville (Spain), as well as technicians in diverse environmental material in the Provincial Environmental Delegation in Almeria.

It is also worth mentioning the existence of scientific support from the Universities of Almeria, Granada and Malaga, the Advanced Centre of Scientific Investigation of Spain (Arid Zone Institute of Almeria), as well as the Sea Classroom in Cabo de Gata and the Sea Classroom in Malaga.

9.2. FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND EQUIPMENT

By Art. 7 in the Protocol, the Parties agree to adopt measures or mechanisms to ensure the financing of the specially protected areas (Art.7.2.d), and the development of an appropriate infrastructure (Art.7.2.f). The General Principles para. "e" in the Annex I call upon the Parties to provide the areas with adequate management means.

9.2.1. Present financial means

Note if the basic financing is ensured: a core funding for basic staff, protection and information measures. Who provides this core funding? Briefly assess the degree of adequacy of the present financial means for the area, either low, moderate, satisfactory; e.g. the implementation of the management plan, including protection, information, education, training and research.

The main financing for the Natural Park comes from the Regional Environmental Ministry, the Autonomous Andalusian Government, which handles all of the aspects of personnel, forestry treatments, vigilance, conservation of species, information, value diffusion, etc.

Just the research remains in the hands of distinct universities and autonomous research centres and the state.

To a lesser extent, EEC has financed a LIFE project for the space with the objective of conserving the priority land ecosystems and the salt lands.

9.2.2. Expected or additional financial sources

Briefly describe any alternative sources of funding in use or planned, and the perspectives for long-term funding from national or other sources.

At the time being there are no other sources of financing.

9.2.3. Basic infrastructure and equipment

Answer YES or NO to the following questions, and if YES, assess with a score of 1-2-3 (1 is low, 3 is high) the adequacy of the basic infrastructure and equipment.

	YES/NO	ADEQUACY
Office and/or laboratory in the field	YES	2
Signs on the main accesses	YES	2
Guard posts on the main accesses	NO	
Visitors information centre	YES	3
Self guided trails with signs	YES	1
Terrestrial vehicles	YES	2
Marine vehicles	YES	1
Radio and communications	YES	2
Environmental awareness materials	YES	2
Capacity to respond to emergencies	YES	2
Comment on basic infrastructure and equipment		

9.3. INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE

By Section D3 of Annex I, the Parties agree that the planning, protection and management of a SPAMI must be based on an adequate knowledge of the elements of the natural environment and of socio-economic and cultural factors that characterize each area. In case of shortcomings in basic knowledge, an area proposed for inclusion in the SPAMI List must have a programme for the collection on the unavailable data and information.

9.3.1. State of knowledge

a) Assess the general state of knowledge of the area.

		2	
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b) Briefly describe the extent of knowledge of the area, considering at least specific maps, main ecological processes, habitat distribution, inventories of species and socio-economic factors, such as artisan fishing.

From the land medium there are catalogues of the land fauna, both vertebrates and invertebrates, as well as catalogues of flora and cartography of the vegetation on a scale of 1:10.000 and 1:50.000. Additionally, there is geology, geomorphology, soil and ethnographic resource cartography. From the marine medium there are exhaustive catalogues of flora and fauna, as well as cartography on a scale of 1:10.000 of the sea floor.

9.3.2. Data collection

Describe and assess the adequacy of any programme and activities to collect data in the area.

Even though rather significant studies have been carried out, it would be a good idea to update the information throughout the territory, in particular about the biological variables and especially about the marine medium and the species that are the most sensitive and /or in danger of extinction.

9.3.3. Monitoring programme

Section D8 in Annex I states that to be included in the SPAMI List, an area will have to be endowed with a monitoring programme having a certain number of significant parameters, in order to allow the assessment of the state and trends of the area, as well as the effectiveness and protection and management measures, so that they may be adapted if need be (indicators may, for instance, supply information about species status, condition of the ecosystem, land-use changes, extraction of natural resources -sand, water, game, fish-, visiting, adherence to the provisions of the management plan, etc.).

a) Is there a monitoring programme?

	NO
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b) If NO, are there plans to start one, and when?

Yes, it will start in 2002/2003

c) If YES, assess as low, medium, satisfactory, its adequacy and present level of development.

d) If YES, who is/are carrying out the monitoring programme?

e) If YES, briefly describe how the monitoring programme will be used in reviewing the management plan.

10. Other information, if any

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11. CONTACT ADDRESSES (name(s), position(s) and contact address(es) of the person(s) in charge with the proposal and that compiled the report)

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Dirección General de Gestión del Medio Natural

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12. SIGNATURE(S) ON BEHALF OF THE STATE(S) PARTY/PARTIES MAKING THE PROPOSAL

Director General de Gestion del Medio
Natural
Junta de Andalucía

Directora General de Conservacion de
la Naturaleza
Ministerio de Medio Ambiente

Fdo. Jose Guirado Romero

Fdo. Ines Gonzalez Doncel

13. DATE

01-10-2001