

SPAMI periodic review report

SPAMI name : Karaburun Sazan National Park

Review type : Ordinary Review

Review year : 2024

Members of the Technical Advisory Commission (TAC)

Alda Ndoj	SPAMI Manager
Sofjan Jaupaj	Focal Point
Carlo FRANZOSINI	Independent Expert
Rezart Kapedani	National Expert
Elodie Couraud	Independent Expert

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Section I: FEATURES PROVIDING A VALUE - ADDED TO THE AREA
(Section B4 of the Annex I, and other obligatory for a SPAMI, and Art . 6 and 7 of the Protocol))

1. MEDITERRANEAN VALUE OF THE SPAMI

	Score
<p>1.1. The SPAMI still fulfils at least one of the criteria related to the regional Mediterranean value as presented in the SPA/BD Protocol's Annex I.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No : 0 Yes : 1</p>	1
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>The SPAMI still fulfils at least one of the criteria related to the regional Mediterranean value as presented in the SPA/BD Protocol's Annex I</p> <p>The area still maintains its characteristics and fulfills its criteria</p> <p>Based on the scientific monitoring that has been carried out in the area, the SPAMI continues to have the presence of habitats there are specific to the Mediterranean region including a robust presence of seagrass meadows and midlittoral bioconstruction. Also, the presence of important and sensitive species like <i>Possidonia oceanica</i>, <i>Lithophyllum byssoides</i>, <i>Monachus monachus</i> and <i>Caretta caretta</i> have been confirmed by monitoring and for <i>M. monachus</i> its presence has increased in the area. The area continues to have a high scientific interest and also its aesthetic values are still considerable.</p>	

	Score
<p>1.2. Level of adverse changes occurred during the evaluation period for the habitats and species considered as natural features in the SPAMI presentation report submitted for the inclusion of the area in the SPAMI List.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>Significant changes : 0 Moderate changes : 1 Slight changes : 2 No adverse change : 3</p>	2

Rationale for the note

No considerable adverse changes have occurred during the evaluation period.

Based on the scientific monitoring that has been carried out in the area, the level of adverse changes occurred during the level of adverse changes occurred during the evaluation period is not considered very high to have negative effects on the habitats and species. Of course, some more investigation is needed on the larger scale adverse changes such as climate change, ocean acidification and their impact on the area.

	<u>Score</u>
<p>1.3. Are the objectives, set out in the original SPAMI application for designation, actively pursued?</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No : 0</p> <p>Only some of them : 1</p> <p>Yes for most of them : 2</p> <p>Yes for all of them : 3</p>	2
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>All the objectives are actively pursued during this period through the MTE (Ministry of Tourism and Environment) work and the NAPA (National Agency of Protected Areas)</p> <p>Based on the work that has been carried out by RAPA Vlore and the ministry, the main objectives that have been pursued are to protect and maintain the biological diversity and other natural values of the area in the long term and to promote sound management practices for sustainable production purposes.</p>	

2. LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

	<u>Score</u>
<p>2.1. The legal status of the SPAMI (with reference to its legal status at the date of the previous evaluation report).</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>Significant negative change in the legal status of the SPAMI : 0</p> <p>Slight negative change in the legal status of the SPAMI : 1</p> <p>The SPAMI has maintained or improved its legal status : 2</p>	2
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>The area continues to be a marine Protected Area and has the same level of Protection as IUCN Category II Protected Area.</p> <p>The area continues to be a Marine Protected Area. It should be noted that with the Decision of Council of Ministers No. 59 of 26.1.2022 the total area has been increased from 12.428 ha to 12.437.7 ha and also the coordinates of the Protected Area have been further refined, digitalized and georeferenced with the latest standards.</p>	

Score	
<p>2.2. Are competencies and responsibilities clearly defined in the texts governing the area?</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>Competencies and responsibilities are not clearly defined : 0</p> <p>The definition of competencies and responsibilities needs slight improvements : 1</p> <p>The SPAMI has clearly defined competencies and responsibilities : 2</p>	<p>2</p>
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>The area has maintained its management model and also has now even more clearer competencies and responsibilities due to the establishment of the NAPA and the Regional administration of Protected Area (RAPA) for the Vlora region (that includes also the management of the MPA).</p> <p>The National Agency of Protected Areas (NAPA) is the responsible institution for managing the national system of protected areas in Albania, whereas day to-day management of protected areas is delegated to 12 Regional Administrations of Protected Areas (RAPAs) as part of NAPA. The Karaburun Sazan falls entirely with the Vlora regions and as such it is the responsibility of the RAPA Vlora. RAPA Vlora maintains also communication with all the other actors mainly through the Management Committee that acts as an advisory body and includes all the regional actors and is headed by the Prefect. Also, RAPA Vlora is the coordination unit for all projects and activities that are implemented within the area from universities, NGO etc. The Law on Protected (81/2017) gives clear responsibilities for the NAPA/RAPA and also the Law on Self Governance gives the responsibilities that local governance (Municipality of Vlora) has in relation to the area.</p>	

Score	
<p>2.3. Does the area have a management body, endowed with sufficient powers?</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No management body, or the management body is not endowed with sufficient powers : 0</p> <p>The management body is not fully dedicated to the SPAMI : 1</p> <p>The SPAMI has a fully dedicated management body and sufficient powers to implement the conservation measures : 2</p>	<p>1</p>
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>Yes, there is a management body but in the Albanian legislation the management body is related as per region (Regional Management Committee) rather to specific Protected Areas. However, this does not tackle the effectiveness of the management. However, with the new amendments of the law is foreseen that for specific National Parks, even specific Offices can be established for their management.</p> <p>As mentioned in the Order of the Minister of Environment No. 750 of 24.11.2015, for the implementation of the Management Plan the structures that are responsible are the National Agency of Protected Area, the Park Management Committee and the respective structures of the local government and line ministries. The main management body is the Regional Administration of Protected Areas of Vlora region that is part of the National Agency of Protected Area.</p>	

3. MANAGEMENT AND AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES

	<u>Score</u>
<p>3.1. Does the SPAMI have a management plan?</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No management plan : 0</p> <p>The level of implementation of the management plan is assessed as “insufficient” : 1</p> <p>The management plan is not officially adopted but its implementation is assessed as “adequate” : 2</p> <p>The management plan is officially adopted and adequately implemented : 3</p>	2
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>The management plan is adopted but its implementation can be further improved and also in the future it will require the review to be in line with the new reality on the ground.</p> <p>The SPAMI has a management plan approved with the Order of the Minister of Environment No. 750 of 24.11.2015. The Management Plan has been prepared with the support of GEF project co-financed by UNDP and the Ministry of Environment. The plan has reached its foreseen duration and is expected to start the preparation for a new management plan for the area.</p>	

	<u>Score</u>
<p>3.2. Assess the adequacy of the management plan taking into account the SPAMI objectives and the requirements set out in article 7 of the Protocole ASP/DB and Section 8.2.3 of the Annotated Format (AF).</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>Low : 0</p> <p>Medium : 1</p> <p>Good : 2</p> <p>Excellent : 3</p>	3

Rationale for the note

The management plan has in consideration the main objectives and requirements that come from the ASP protocol and also is in line with the main international requirements for the area.

The existing management plan of the Karaburun Sazan MPA is based on the template of the Management Plans approved with the Order of the Minister of Environment, Forest and Water Administration No. 1448 of 21.2.2013.

Based on the Order, the Management Plan of Karaburun Sazan is structured in the following:

2 Description of the Protected Area

- 2.1 Location, Boundaries and Legal Status
- 2.2 Policies and Legislation
- 2.3 Interest Groups of PA
- 2.4 Description of the Natural System of PA
- 2.5 Existing Facilities of The Protected Area and Current Use by Visitors
- 2.6 Social - Economic System
- 2.7 Current and Anticipated Governance Structure
- 2.8 Landscape and Cultural Heritage
- 2.9 Studies and Scientific Research in Relation to Marine Protected Areas.

3 Assessment of the Protected Area and Analysis of the Institutional Framework

- 3.1 Analysis of Values and Threats

4 Protected Area Management

- 4.1 Vision
- 4.2 Themes, Objectives and Activities of the Management Plan
- 4.3 Management Areas of "Karaburun-Sazan" Protected Area

5 Financial Plan

- 5.1 Human Resource Plan

6 Management Monitoring and Evaluation

- 6.1 Monitoring the Management Plan
- 6.2 Evaluation of Management Effectiveness

7 References / Bibliography

8 Appendices

	<u>Score</u>
<p>3.3. Assess the adequacy of the human resources available to the SPAMI.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>Very low/Insufficient : 0</p> <p>Low : 1</p> <p>Adequate : 2</p> <p>Excellent : 3</p>	2

Rationale for the note

There is dedicated staff for the RAPA Vlora that deal with the everyday management of the MPA related to the SPAMI, although there is room for further improvement.

RAPA Vlora has 32 staff, but it should be mentioned that the staff deals with the entire region and not only with the SPAMI area. There are 3-4 staff dealing only with the area and also some staff that are reallocated during the summer period where the pressure on the area is larger. Also, staff that is attached to projects collaborate with RAPA Vlora when dealing with the management of the area.

Score	
<p>3.4. Assess the adequacy of the financial and material means available to the SPAMI</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>Very low : 0</p> <p>Low : 1</p> <p>Adequate : 2</p> <p>Excellent : 3</p>	2
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>There is dedicated fund for the management of the protected areas that fall in the responsibilities of RAPA Vlora that deal with the everyday management of the MPA related to the SPAMI, although there is room for further improvement.</p>	

Score	
<p>3.5. Does the area have a monitoring programme?</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No monitoring programme : 0</p> <p>The level of implementation of the monitoring programme is assessed as “insufficient” : 1</p> <p>The monitoring programme needs improvement to cover other parameters that are significant for the SPAMI : 2</p> <p>The monitoring programme is adequately implemented and allows the assessment of the state and evolution of the area, as well as the effectiveness of protection and management measures : 3</p>	3

Rationale for the note

Yes, there is a regular monitoring program for the area but it has been supported also by donors and projects. In the future it will need further support to increase the level of support and the parameters to be monitored.

There is a monitoring program that is included in the management plan and some parts of it are being regularly monitored. The main monitoring activities are mentioned below:

- Monitoring of Posidonia meadows
- Monitoring water quality parameters in 12 stations
- Monitoring of *Cystoseira* spp.
- Mapping of *Litophyllum bissoides*
- Presence of monk seal in submerged caves
- Monitoring of marine litter in specific beaches
- Monitoring of Length of coastline subject to physical disturbance due to the influence of human-made structures (following the Guideline related to IMAP Indicator 16)

	Score
<p>3.6. Is there a feedback mechanism that establishes an explicit link between the monitoring results and the management objectives, and which allows adaptation of protection and management measures?</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>Low : 0</p> <p>Medium : 1</p> <p>Good : 2</p> <p>Excellent : 3</p>	<p>2</p>
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>In general, there is a connection between the results that the monitoring has and the protection and management measures taken, since the monitoring is done mainly by the staff of RAPA or people that are in close connection with the RAPA Vlora.</p> <p>All results that are related to the monitoring are discussed within RAPA Vlora, in the meetings with NAPA and also the management committee. Some examples include the proposal for extending the core area due to the presence of the monk seal in caves near the core area, or the presence of marine litter in increasing the protection measures in the beaches in and near the marine park.</p>	

	Score
<p>3.7. Is the management plan effectively implemented?</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>Low : 0</p> <p>Medium : 1</p> <p>Good : 2</p> <p>Excellent : 3</p>	<p>2</p>

Rationale for the note

The management plan is effectively implemented although not in its entirety.

The effectiveness of the management plan will be correctly measured once the procedure to review the plan will start in 2025. However from the analysis of the management plan from the 54 activities foreseen in the management plan, 39 have been implemented satisfactory and 15 have been implemented on average while no activities remain as non implemented.

		<u>Score</u>
<p>3.8. Have any concrete conservation measures, activities and actions been implemented?</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>Low : 0</p> <p>Medium : 1</p> <p>Good : 2</p> <p>Excellent : 3</p> <p>Section II: FEATURES PROVIDING A VALUE-ADDED TO THE AREA</p> <p>4. THREATS AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT</p>	2	
<p>4.1. Assess the level of threats within the site to the ecological, biological, aesthetic and cultural values of the area</p> <p><u>Rationale for the note</u> (B4.a Annex I).</p> <p>Some measures have been implemented.</p> <p>UnSome of the activities to be mentioned as fully implemented include: the existence of threats within the site, and part b) asking about the response made to mitigate such threats. If the answer to part a) is "no threats", part b) is not applicable. Whereas, when threats are reported under part a), part b) should be used. Mapping the habitats and then monitoring the status of Posidonia is considered as a bonus and has no impact on the score evaluation and consequently the result.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation and monitoring of aquaculture intensity; research on the impact of aquaculture and its monitoring • Construction of mooring buoys: assessment, design and deployment • Monitoring the preparation of spatial planning documents and participation in meetings • Supervision/observation of unauthorized constructions and informative inspection • IUU fishery surveillance/observation and informative inspection • Compilation of the list of tourist attractions and its periodic updating <p>4. Facilitating clear and easy entry/access procedures for tour operators (by sea and land) etc. water, timber, living resources) See 5.1.1. in AF.</p>		
		<u>Score</u>
<p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No threats : 3</p> <p>Weak threats : 2</p> <p>Serious threats : 1</p> <p>Very serious threats : 0</p> <p>(If the answer is "no threats", pass directly to question 4.1.2. a).</p>	2	
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>Basically there is not threat in this part although we can mention there were some illegal fishing activities in the past and also some illegal harvesting of L. lithophaga.</p>		

Score	
<p>4.1.1.b. Efforts (actions) undertaken during the evaluation period to address/mitigate the unregulated exploitation of natural resources (e.g. sand mining, water, timber, living resources) See 5.1.1. in AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No efforts : 0 Little efforts : 1 Some efforts : 2 Significant efforts : 3</p> <p>(If applicable: Not applicable if the answer to question 4.1.1. a) is “no threats”.)</p>	<p>2</p>
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>There have been efforts through the inspection and enforcement of the legislation to reduce the IUU fishery activities and also the illegal harvesting of the <i>L. lithophaga</i> in the area.</p>	

Score	
<p>4.1.2.a. Threats to habitats and species (e.g. disturbance, desiccation, pollution, poaching, introduced alien species) See 5.1.2. in AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No threats : 3 Weak threats : 2 Serious threats : 1 Very serious threats : 0</p> <p>(If the answer is “no threats”, pass directly to question 4.1.3. a).</p>	<p>2</p>
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>Some threats are mainly related to the pollution especially in the internal area of the Vlora bay and some disturbance due to the touristic activities.</p>	

Score	
<p>4.1.2.b. Efforts (actions) undertaken during the evaluation period to address/mitigate the threats to habitats and species (e.g. disturbance, desiccation, pollution, poaching, introduced alien species) See 5.1.2. in AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No efforts : 0 Little efforts : 1 Some efforts : 2 Significant efforts : 3</p> <p>(If applicable: Not applicable if the answer to question 4.1.2. a) is “no threats”.)</p>	<p>2</p>
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>RAPA Vlorë is constantly monitoring the touristic efforts to avoid disturbance in the MPA while for the pollution the Government is working toward the minimization of the effects of urban waste water in the area.</p>	

Score	
<p>4.1.3.a. Increase of human impact (e.g. tourism, boats, building, immigration...) See 5.1.3. in AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No threats : 3 Weak threats : 2 Serious threats : 1 Very serious threats : 0</p> <p>(If the answer is “no threats”, pass directly to question 4.1.4. a).</p>	<p>1</p>
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>Tourism has increased significantly in the area although the MPA has not been directly involved in these developments. Also the number of boats, especially the leisure activity has increased significantly in the area.</p>	

	<u>Score</u>
<p>4.1.3.b. Efforts undertaken during the evaluation to address/mitigate the increase of human impact (e.g. tourism, boats, building, immigration...) See 5.1.3. in AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No efforts : 0 Little efforts : 1 Some efforts : 2 Significant efforts : 3</p> <p>(If applicable: Not applicable if the answer to question 4.1.3. a) is “no threats”.)</p>	2
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>RAPA Vlorë has worked actively into regulating the touristic and boat activities in relation to their access to the SPAMI area so that they can be minimized.</p>	

	<u>Score</u>
<p>4.1.4.a. Conflicts between users or user groups. See 5.1.4. and 6.2 in AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No threats : 3 Weak threats : 2 Serious threats : 1 Very serious threats : 0</p> <p>(If the answer is “no threats”, pass directly to question 4.1.5. a).</p>	2
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>There is no large conflicts in the area although it should be mentioned some interaction among the touristic activities, small scale fishery and touristic boats.</p>	

	<u>Score</u>
<p>4.1.4.b. Efforts (actions) undertaken during the evaluation period to address/mitigate the conflicts between users or user groups. See 5.1.4.</p>	2

and 6.2 in AF.

Rating scale

No efforts : 0

Little efforts : 1

Some efforts : 2

Significant efforts : 3

(If applicable: Not applicable if the answer to question 4.1.4. a) is “no threats”.)

Rationale for the note

RAPA Vlora and other structures (National Coastal Agency etc.) are actively involved in the area to minimize the potential negative interaction that may occur.

Please include here a prescriptive list of threats (not evaluated or mentioned above) that are of concern and are evaluated individually:

4.2. Assess the level of external threats to the ecological, biological, aesthetic and cultural values of the area (B4.a of the Annex I) and the efforts made to address/mitigate them. See 5.2 in the AF.

Under section 4.2, questions are asked in two parts: part a) enquiring on the existence of external threats, and part b) asking about the response made to mitigate such threats. If the answer to part a) is “no threats”, part b) is not applicable. Whereas, when threats are reported under part a), part b) should be answered. The score achieved in response to part b) is considered a bonus and has no impact on the score evaluation and consequently the result of the review.

	<u>Score</u>
<p>4.2.1.a. Pollution problems from external sources including solid waste and those affecting waters up-current. See 5.2.1 in AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No threats : 3</p> <p>Weak threats : 2</p> <p>Serious threats : 1</p> <p>Very serious threats : 0</p> <p>(If the answer is “no threats”, pass directly to question 4.1.2. a).</p>	2

Rationale for the note

The area is relatively protected from pollution problems from external sources. It should be mentioned that sometime has been reported some pollution coming from large touristic ships (or ferryboats) that are present in the neighboring area close to the SPAMI.

The tourism development sector is quite an important one in the area near the SPAMI area as the Vlorë Bay is highly sought for touristic activities. This brings pollution issues in the vicinity of the area. However, it should be mentioned that Vlorë already has an Urban Wastewater Treatment Plant and also usually the effects of the pollution in the Vlorë Bay are more felt in the northern part of the bay rather than in the SPAMI area. Something that needs to be mentioned is that Climate Change is considered a threat since Albanian coast is particularly vulnerable to the climate change effects.

	<u>Score</u>
<p>4.2.1.b. Efforts (actions) undertaken during the evaluation period to address/mitigate the pollution problems from external sources including solid waste and those affecting waters up-current. See 5.2.1 in AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No efforts : 0 Little efforts : 1 Some efforts : 2 Significant efforts : 3</p> <p>(If applicable: Not applicable if the answer to question 4.2.1. a) is “no threats”.)</p>	1
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>The structures that are in charge of the marine environment and also the enforcing agencies have taken continuous step to address this concerns.</p>	

	<u>Score</u>
<p>4.2.2.a. Significant impacts on landscapes and on cultural values. See 5.2.2 in AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No threats : 3 Weak threats : 2 Serious threats : 1 Very serious threats : 0</p> <p>(If the answer is “no threats”, pass directly to question 4.2.3. a).</p>	1

Rationale for the note

For the moments we value that the threats are serious although the majority of the terrestrial area near the SPAMI is also declared Protected Area.

	<u>Score</u>
<p>4.2.2.b. Efforts (actions) undertaken during the evaluation period to address/mitigate the significant impacts on landscapes and on cultural values. See 5.2.2 in AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No efforts : 0</p> <p>Little efforts : 1</p> <p>Some efforts : 2</p> <p>Significant efforts : 3</p> <p>(If applicable: Not applicable if the answer to question 4.2.2. a) is “no threats”.)</p>	<p>2</p>

Rationale for the note

The area is considered important both from the natural and the touristic point of view so that the Government has put effort in the conservation of its values.

	<u>Score</u>
<p>4.2.3.a. Expected development of threats upon the surrounding area. See 6.1 in AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No threats : 3</p> <p>Weak threats : 2</p> <p>Serious threats : 1</p> <p>Very serious threats : 0</p> <p>(If the answer is “no threats”, pass directly to question 4.2.4. a).</p>	<p>1</p>

Rationale for the note

The area surrounding the SPAMI is mainly threatened by the construction of touristic facilities. However the impact of these developments needs to be quantified in the future.

		<u>Score</u>
<p>4.2.3.b. Efforts (actions) undertaken during the evaluation period to address/mitigate the expected development of threats upon the surrounding area. See 6.1 in AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No efforts : 0</p> <p>Little efforts : 1</p> <p>Some efforts : 2</p> <p>Significant efforts : 3</p> <p>(If applicable: Not applicable if the answer to question 4.2.3. a) is “no threats”.)</p>	<p>1</p>	

Rationale for the note

There is an effort to protect the area of the SPAMI and its surrounding that are already declared as Protected Areas. Also the plans in place put some efforts in limiting the environmental effects of such development in the nearby areas.

Please include here a prescriptive list of threats (not evaluated or mentioned above) that are of concern and are evaluated individually:

a

Please include the list of threats (not evaluated or mentioned above) that were of concern and were eliminated or solved :

		<u>Score</u>
<p>4.3. Is there an integrated coastal management plan or land-use laws in the area bordering'.' or surrounding the SPAMI? (B4.e Annex I). See 5.2.3. in AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p>	<p>1</p>	

<p>No : 0</p> <p>Yes : 1</p>	
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>Albania has an Integrated Coastal Management Plan prepared in 2015 (PINS Bregdeti) and also Local development Plan for each municipality that regulate the urban development of the areas.</p> <p>Albania has a dedicated legal framework that covers procedures of planning, including drafting, consultation, coordination, and adoption of planning documents. This is Law no. 107/2014 “For territorial planning and development” and Decision of Council of Minister (DCM) no. 686/2017 “For the adoption of territorial planning regulation”. It should be noted that Albania also have transposed into the national legislation the EIA and SEA directives part of the EU Acquis.</p> <p>On the spatial planning framework, the General National Plan (PPK) "Albania 2030" is the highest instrument of territorial planning in Albania, but also important report is the Integrated Coastal Zone Inter-Sectoral Plan (PINS-Bregdeti) that provides the vision of coastline development. It orients the sectoral developments of national importance in the field of tourism, environment, transport, energy, agriculture, culture, etc., as well as urban developments in the territories administered by the municipalities.</p> <p>On a municipality level, the General Local Plan (PPV) for the Vlora municipality is approved on 16.10.2017 with Decision No.1 of the National Territorial Council and reviewed two times respectively in May 2019 and December 2020. All these plans take into consideration the protected areas zoning and the level of protection of development provided by that legislation.</p>	

	Score
<p>4.4. Does the management plan for the SPAMI have influence over the governance' . ' of the surrounding area? (D5.d Annex I). See 7.4.4. in the AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No : 0</p> <p>Yes : 1</p>	1
<p>5. ENFORCEMENT OF PROTECTION MEASURES</p> <p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>5.1. Assess the degree of enforcement of the protection measures. In particular</p> <p>The degree of enforcement of the protection measures in relation to the management and the land use of the area and of the surrounding areas.</p> <p>Yes, the management plan and the legal status that the area has influence in relation to the surrounding area. It is to be mentioned that for Allocated Zone for Aquaculture has been moved from the areas near the SPAMI due to the status of the area.</p>	
<p>5.1.1. Are the boundaries of the area adequately marked on land and, if applicable, adequately marked at sea? See 8.3.1. in the AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No : 0</p> <p>Yes : 1</p>	1

Rationale for the note

All the boundaries of the SPAMI and of the protected areas now are digitalized and included also in the National Geoportal.

The area is included in the official National Geoportal (ASIG Geoportal – <https://geoportal.asig.gov.al>). The geoportal is maintained by the State Authority for Geospatial Information (ASIG) based on European Standards of INSPIRE Directive. Also some marking of the boundaries and specific important points have been set at sea as well.

	<u>Score</u>
<p>5.1.2. Is there any collaboration from other authorities in the protection and surveillance of the area and, if applicable, is there a coastguard service contributing to the marine protection? See 8.3.2. and 8.3.3. in AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No : 0</p> <p>Yes : 1</p>	<p>1</p>

Rationale for the note

There are different institutions that are related to the protection and surveillance of the area, including the Border Police that regulated the maritime activities, the Fishery Inspectorate that deals with the enforcement of inspection for the fishing activities, the National Environmental Agency that deals with the pollution issues and the Water Resource Management Agency that is in charge of controlling the maritime water quality.

	<u>Score</u>
<p>5.1.3. Are third party agencies also empowered to enforce regulations relating to the SPAMI protective measures?</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No : 0</p> <p>Yes : 1</p>	<p>1</p>

Rationale for the note

RAPA Vlora is the main institution but it collaborates with other institutions in terms of enforcing the regulation.

In relation to the water quality, RAPA Vlora collaborates with the Institute of Public Health in relation to the results of bathing water monitoring for the set points they have near the area and also collaborate with the municipality in relation to the integrated waste management and prevention of pollution related to waste pollution.

Score	
<p>5.1.4. Are there adequate penalties and powers for effective enforcement? See 8.3.4. in AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No : 0 Yes : 1</p>	1
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>Penalties and powers are in place for the effective enforcement in the area.</p> <p>The penalties are set in different sectorial laws where the amount of the penalty and the procedure for the setting of the penalties and the appeal procedures are also mentioned. Some of the laws that contain penalties that are relevant for the area include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law No. 81 of 4.5.2017 Protected Areas (for penalties related to damage, construction or polluting in the Protected Areas) • Law No. 9587 of 20.07.2006 Biodiversity Protection (for penalties related to damaging the biodiversity, hunting or catching protected species, introduction of invasive alien species etc.) • Law No. 10006 of 23.10.2008 Protection Wild Fauna (for penalties related to damaging the wild fauna destroying their habitats, exposing in non-suitable and licensed areas etc.) • Law No. 29 of 4.4.2024 Water Resources (for penalties related to water pollution and actions that might bring erosion in the coast etc.) • Law No. 10463 of 22.9.2011 Waste Integrated Management (for penalties related to pollution from waste, hazardous waste, plastic, packaging etc.) • Law No. 64 of 31.05.2012 on Fishery (for penalties related to IUU fishery, protected marine species etc.) 	

Score	
<p>5.1.5. Is the field staff empowered to impose sanctions? See 8.3.4. in AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No : 0 Yes : 1</p>	0
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>Not directly, but through the collaboration with the other agencies they can.</p> <p>The staff of RAPA has established contacts with the enforcement agencies and when needed, the enforcement authorities are contacted by the management staff to have ad-hoc inspections. Meanwhile all enforcement agencies have their own inspection schedules that are communicated with RAPA as well.</p>	

Score	
<p>5.1.6. Has the area established a contingency plan to face accidental pollution or other serious emergencies? (Art. 7.3. in the Protocol, Recommendation of</p>	0

<p>the 13th Meeting of Contracting Parties).</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No : 0</p> <p>Yes : 1</p>	
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>The contingency plan is not part of the management plan but usually falls in the competencies of the region and of the municipalities.</p>	

6. COOPERATION AND NETWORKING

	<u>Score</u>
<p>6.1. Are other national or international organizations collaborating to provide human or financial resources? (e.g. researchers, experts, volunteers...). See 9.1.3. in the AF.</p> <p><u>Rating scale</u></p> <p>No : 0</p> <p>Weakly : 1</p> <p>Fairly : 2</p> <p>Excellent : 3</p>	2
<p><u>Rationale for the note</u></p> <p>The area has been supported by different projects that are related to its management and monitoring. Also different scientific research activities have occurred in the area.</p> <p>The area has had several collaborations with national and international organizations that have given support to the area. Some of the recent collaborations are mentioned below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP Albania (Improving Coverage and Effectiveness Management of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas – Phase I - II & Enhancing Financial Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Albania) • MedFund (Supporting the Effective Management of Karaburun - Sazan National Marine Park) • PIM Initiative (Improvement of Coverage and Management of MCPA in Albania) • PAP/RAC (Coastal Area Management Program – CAMP Otranto) 	

	<u>Score</u>
<p>6.2. Assess the level of cooperation and exchange with other SPAMIs (especially in other nations). (Art. 8, Art. 21.1, Art. 22.1., Art. 22.3 of the Protocol, A.d in Annex I).</p>	2

Rating scale

No : 0

Insufficient : 1

Fairly : 2

Excellent : 3

Rationale for the note

The RAPA Vlora is active in collaboration with other MPAs in the Mediterranean due to projects common activities etc.

The administration is involved in the regional initiatives that are related to the management of Mediterranean Protected Areas such as the Network of Marine Protected Areas managers in the Mediterranean (MedPAN). Also, RAPA Vlora has a good collaboration with the Italian SPAMI (Torre Guaceto) in the recent period.

CONCLUSION* (based on score*) :

Based on the results obtained, the SPAMI is maintained in the ordinary revision process.

*Evaluation of the score:

The TAC will propose to include the SPAMI in a period of provisional nature (in accordance with paragraph 6 of the Procedure for the revision of the areas included in the SPAMI List) if the SPAMI has:

- a score < 1 in one or more of the following questions: 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6;
- a score < 2 in one or more of the following questions: 1.2, 1.3, 7.1 and 7.2.

Furthermore, considering that the sites included in the SPAMI List are intended to have a value of example and model for the protection of the natural heritage of the region (Paragraph A.e of Annex 1 to the SPA/BD Protocol), the TAC shall also propose to include the SPAMI in a period of provisional nature if:

- the total score of the evaluation is less than 54 for a coastal national SPAMI (= 70% of the maximum total score without bonus: 78);
- the total score of the evaluation is less than 50 for a coastal national SPAMI subject to its first ordinary periodic review (= 70% of the maximum total score without bonus: 72);
- the total score of the evaluation is less than 58 for a multilateral (transboundary high sea) SPAMI (= 70% of the maximum total score without bonus: 83);
- the total score of the evaluation is less than 53 for a multilateral (transboundary high sea) SPAMI subject to its first ordinary periodic review (=70% of the maximum total score without bonus: 77).

The bonus will count only in the case where the SPAMI has not reached the minimum score without the bonus. Then, the bonus will be added to the total score achieved by the SPAMI.

**Section I: FEATURES PROVIDING A VALUE - ADDED TO THE AREA
(Section B4 of the Annex I, and other obligatory for a SPAMI, and Art . 6 and 7 of the Protocol))**

1. MEDITERRANEAN VALUE OF THE SPAMI

Total score 5 (Max : 7)

2. LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Total score 5 (Max : 6)

3. MANAGEMENT AND AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES

Total score 18 (Max : 24)

Section II: FEATURES PROVIDING A VALUE-ADDED TO THE AREA

4. THREATS AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT

Total score 13 (Max : 23)

5. ENFORCEMENT OF PROTECTION MEASURES

Total score 4 (Max : 6)

6. COOPERATION AND NETWORKING

Total score 4 (Max : 6)

Total score without bonus 49 (Max : 72)

Bonus points 12

Overall total score

61 (Max : 86)

Recommendations for future evaluation

1 - Update the Management Plan The current management plan is set to expire at the end of 2025. The process for updating the plan has already begun and should continue to ensure the full validation of the new management plan by 2026. The updated plan must address identified threats, such as tourism impacts, and outline key steps for the area's development. It should also incorporate the main requirements of Article 7 of the ASP/DB Protocol, including: (a) legal and institutional framework and management and protection measures; (b) continuous monitoring of ecological (c) active involvement of local communities and populations (d) mechanisms for financing (e) regulation of activities (f) training of managers

2 - Reinforce Monitoring - Building on the existing robust monitoring activities, the new management plan should expand monitoring efforts to include: - Additional key biocenoses, particularly coralligenous habitats - Fish population assessments (e.g., size, biomass, species richness) - Spillover effects for the benefit of local fisheries - Monitoring of invasive species - Monitoring of tourism impacts Collaborations should be further developed with local and national universities to support these initiatives.

3 - Manage Tourism and Carrying Capacity - The rapid growth of tourism poses a serious threat to the site's conservation value. Management efforts should address tourism impacts by: - Conducting a dedicated study to evaluate the site's carrying capacity on both land and sea (e.g., anchoring, disturbance of caves) - Implementing mitigation measures in partnership with tourism operators across the broader area - Monitoring visitor numbers and their impacts

4 - Improve Financial Resources - A key challenge for the coming years will be to secure a sustainable financial structure for the site's management. As the site becomes more effective in its management activities, a reliable financing mechanism must be developed to ensure long-term sustainability. The introduction of fee collection should be experimented as a stable and non-restricted funding source for the management team.

5 - Adapt Regulations - Adaptive management actions and the evolution of regulations, guided by scientific evidence, should be supported at all levels. Extending the core zone will be crucial to conserve important Monk Seal habitats and protect them from tourism-related disturbances. This will ensure the long-term preservation of the Mediterranean values of the site.

6 - Enhance Communication - Improve communication efforts to promote management activities, share knowledge, and highlight success stories at both local (municipality, tourism operators) and national levels (Ministry, universities). These efforts should aim to increase awareness and engagement with stakeholders while fostering support for conservation initiatives.

Signatures

Alda Ndoj
SPAMI Manager



Carlo FRANZOSINI
Independent Expert



Elodie Couraud
Independent Expert



Sofjan Jaupaj
Focal Point



Rezart Kapedani
National Expert

