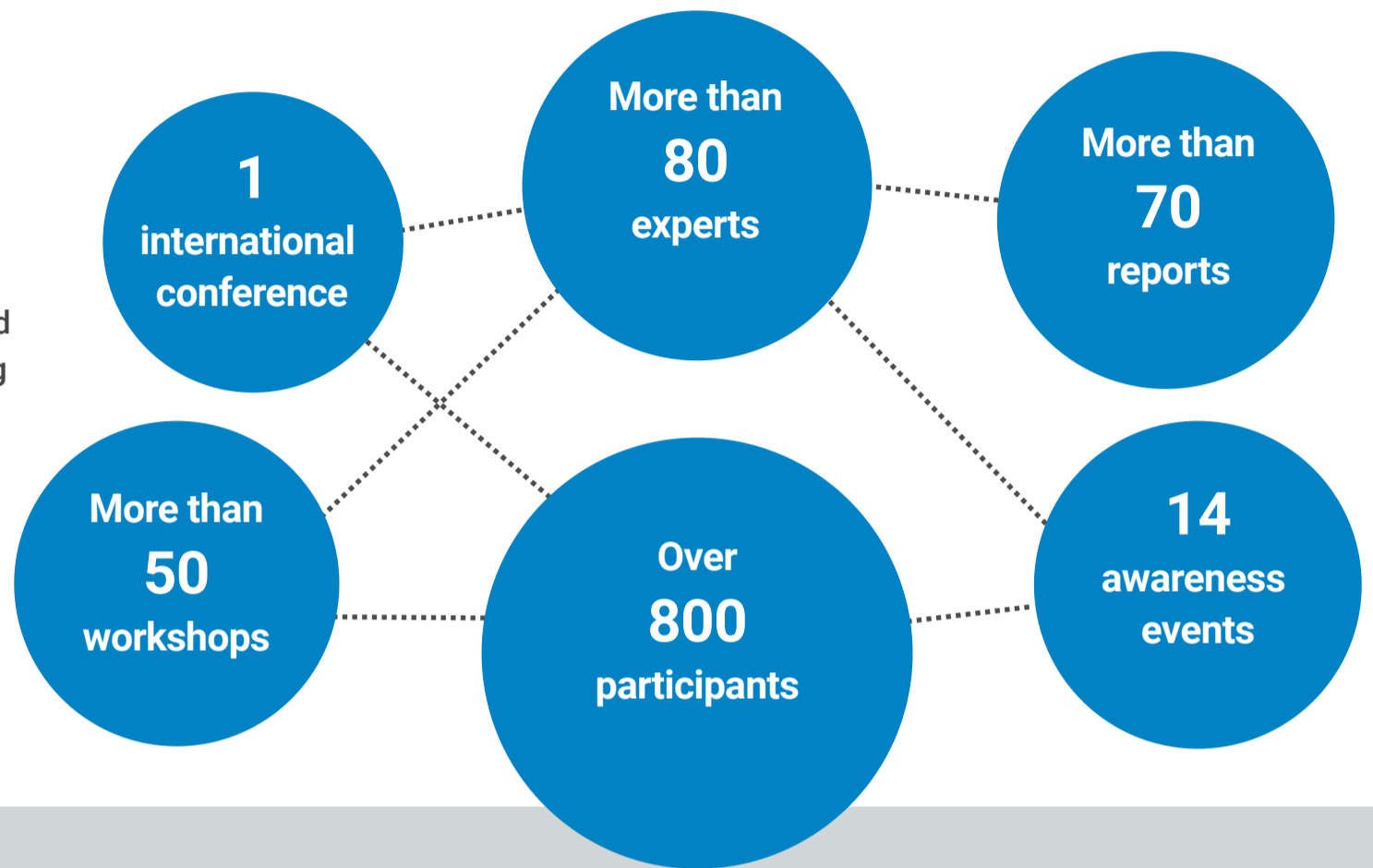


Results and achievements of the GEF Adriatic project

GEF Adriatic is the first initiative to implement an ecosystem approach (EcAp) to Marine Spatial Planning in the Adriatic. Applied in Albania and Montenegro, it can serve as a model approach for implementation in other Mediterranean countries.

■ The Process

The project was organised as a participatory process. It involved both national and international institutions and teams of experts and fostered cooperation, capacity building and awareness raising.



■ Main outcomes

First ever integrated assessments of marine and coastal environmental status in Albania and Montenegro based on ecological objectives and indicators agreed on at a Mediterranean level.



First ever national integrated monitoring programmes for marine and coastal environment prepared for Albania and Montenegro, following the principles adopted by the Contracting parties to the Barcelona Convention.



First national marine surveys carried out according to the guidelines set out in the Mediterranean Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP).



Two national information systems developed for marine and coastal data, enabling easy assessment and reporting to the Barcelona Convention IMAP Info System.



First proposal for a Marine Spatial Plan based on an ecosystem approach developed for Montenegro, with a GIS database enabling environmental, sectoral, and spatial assessment and planning.



■ The achievements

1

The project contributed to the overall implementation of the Barcelona Convention policy framework in the Adriatic, as well as to the process of accession to the European Union by the two beneficiary countries (Albania and Montenegro) through:

- The development and improvement of a regulatory framework for common efforts and implementation of the ecosystem approach process (EcAp/IMAP);
- Agreed approaches and collective actions towards reaching Good Environmental Status (GES).

Fuelled common efforts towards shared vision and improved governance

2

The project increased the national capacity to improve the status of the marine and coastal environment.

Increased national capacity

3

The project increased the area of productive seascape in Montenegro where conservation and the sustainable use of biodiversity is integrated, by:

- Developing a planning tool for improved management of sea uses without undermining or degrading marine biodiversity;
- Designating at least 8% of the total marine area for conservation (equal to 45% of internal waters) or at least 13% of both coastal and marine areas considered together, which is 30% more than the 2021 target value;
- Contributing to the conservation of at least 80% of known *Posidonia oceanica* meadows, an habitat considered globally as one of the most significant biodiversity hotspots and carbon sinks.
- Contributing to a process towards establishing 2 new protected marine areas, initiated following the findings of the coralligenous assemblages survey in Boka Kotorska (Montenegro).

Improved management of productive seascape covering 2500 km²

Increased protected areas 30% over target values

Improved conservation of key habitats

■ With special thanks to:

- Ministry of Tourism and Environment (Albania)
- National Agency of Protected Areas (Albania)
- Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism (Montenegro)

and:

- Centre for Ecotoxicological Research (Montenegro)
- Information and Communication Regional Activity Centre (INFO/RAC)
- Institute for Hydrometeorology and Seismology (Montenegro)

- Institute of Marine Biology (Montenegro)
- Institute for Nature Conservation in Albania (Albania)
- Institute for Oceanography and Fisheries (Croatia)
- Nature and Environment Protection Agency (Montenegro)
- National Environment Agency (Albania)
- Public Enterprise Morsko Dobro (Montenegro)
- Programme for the Assessment and Control of Marine Pollution in the Mediterranean (MED POL)

...and all the other organisations, experts and volunteers that came along and supported our initiative.