

Thematic report on protected areas or areas where special measures need to be taken to conserve biological diversity

Please provide the following details on the origin of this report.

Contracting Party:	ITALY
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Please provide summary information on the process by which this report has been prepared, including information on the types of stakeholders who have been actively involved in its preparation and on material which was used as a basis for the report.

The report has been prepared by the Ministry of Environment, specifically by the Nature Conservation Directorate with the support of the Technical Secretariat for Natural Protected Areas.

The Marine Protected Areas Unit of the Directorate for Marine Protection also contributed with information to the preparation of the report.

In an early stage of the process the Italian Federation of Protected Areas (Federparchi) has been involved through meetings and exchange of information.

The most important Italian environmental NGOs were also consulted. They provided substantial information for the report.

Protected areas or areas where special measures need to be taken to conserve biological diversity

System of protected areas

1. What is the relative priority afforded to development and implementation of a national system of protected areas in the context of other obligations arising from the Convention and COP Decisions?					
a) High	X	b) Medium		c) Low	
2. Is there a systematic planning process for development and implementation of a national system of protected areas?					
a) no					
b) in early stages of development					
c) in advanced stages of development					X
d) yes, please provide copies of relevant documents describing the process					
3. Is there an assessment of the extent to which the existing network of protected areas covers all areas that are identified as being important for the conservation of biological diversity?					
a) no					
b) an assessment is being planned for					
c) an assessment is being undertaken					X
d) yes, please provide copies of the assessments made					

Regulatory framework

4. Is there a policy framework and/or enabling legislation in place for the establishment and management of protected areas?	
a) no	
b) in early stages of development	
c) in advanced stages of development	
d) yes, please provide copies of relevant documents	X
5. Have guidelines, criteria and targets been adopted to support selection, establishment and management of protected areas?	
a) no	
b) in early stages of development	
c) in advanced stages of development	
d) yes, please provide copies of guidelines, criteria and targets	X – Included in the framework law on PAs, in the EU Habitat Directive, guidelines for the identification of marine PAs and on management of Natura 2000 sites have also been developed.

6. Does the management of protected areas involve the use of incentive measures, for instance, of entrance fees for park visitors, or of benefit-sharing arrangements with adjacent communities and other relevant stakeholders?	
a) no	
b) yes, incentive measures implemented for some protected areas (please provide some examples)	X - see further comments below
c) yes, incentive measures implemented for all protected areas (please provide some examples)	

Management approach

7. Have the principal threats to protected areas and the biodiversity that they contain been assessed, so that programmes can be put in place to deal with the threats, their effects and to influence the key drivers?	
a) no	
b) an assessment is being planned for	
c) an assessment is in process	X – Implemented in many PAs, under development in others
d) yes, an assessment has been completed	
e) programmes and policies to deal with threats are in place (please provide basic information on threats and actions taken)	
8. Are protected areas established and managed in the context of the wider region in which they are located, taking account of and contributing to other sectoral strategies?	
a) no	
b) yes, in some areas	X
c) yes, in all areas (please provide details)	
9. Do protected areas vary in their nature, meeting a range of different management objectives and/or being operated through differing management regimes?	
a) no, most areas are established for similar objectives and are under similar management regimes	
b) many areas have similar objectives/management regimes, but there are also some exceptions	
c) yes, protected areas vary in nature (please provide details)	X – see further comments below
10. Is there wide stakeholder involvement in the establishment and management of protected areas?	
a) no	
b) with some, but not all protected areas	
c) yes, always (please provide details of experience)	X – see further comments below

11. Do protected areas established and managed by non-government bodies, citizen groups, private sector and individuals exist in your country, and are they recognized in any formal manner?	
a) no, they do not exist	
b) yes, they exist, however are not formally recognized	
c) yes, they exist and are formally recognized (please provide further information)	X – see further comments below

Available resources

12. Are the human, institutional and financial resources available adequate for full implementation of the protected areas network, including for management of individual protected areas?	
a) no, they are severely limiting (please provide basic information on needs and shortfalls)	
b) no, they are limiting (please provide basic information on needs and shortfalls)	
c) Available resources are adequate (please provide basic information on needs and shortfalls)	X – see further comments below
d) yes, good resources are available	
13. Has your country requested/received financial assistance from the Global Environment Facility or other international sources for establishment/management of protected areas?	
a) no	
b) funding has been requested, but not received	
c) funding is currently being requested	
d) yes, funding has been received (please provide copies of appropriate documents)	X – EU Life Programme for implementation of Natura 2000 coordinated at Central level (see document). Many other EU funding have been used at local level.

Assessment

14. Have constraints to implementation and management of an adequate system of protected areas been assessed, so that actions can be initiated to deal with these constraints?	
a) no	X
b) yes, constraints have been assessed (please provide further information)	
c) yes, actions to deal with constraints are in place (please provide further information)	

15. Is a programme in place or in development to regularly assess the effectiveness of protected areas management and to act on this information?	
a) no	X – Some PAs are developing environmental certification schemes such as the EU EMAS (for instance Circeo NP and Po river, tratto vercellese – alessandrino Regional Park and some Marine PAs)
b) yes, a programme is under development (please provide further information)	
c) yes, a programme is in place (please provide further information)	
16. Has any assessment been made of the value of the material and non-material benefits and services that protected areas provide?	
a) no	
b) an assessment is planned	
c) an assessment is in process	X – Two major studies have been implemented on the traditional food products and on the cultural heritage in PAs. The two publications are essential to increase the awareness on material and non-material value of PAs other than wildlife.
d) yes, an assessment has been made (please provide further information)	

Regional and international cooperation

17. Is your country collaborating/communicating with neighbouring countries in the establishment and/or management of transboundary protected areas?	
a) no	
b) yes (please provide details)	X – see further comments below
18. Are key protected areas professionals in your country members of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas, thereby helping to foster the sharing of information and experience?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
c) information is not available	
19. Has your country provided information on its protected areas to the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre in order to allow for a scientific assessment of the status of the world's protected areas?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
20. If your country has protected areas or other sites recognised or designated under an international convention or programme (including regional conventions and programmes), please provide copies of reports submitted to those programmes or summaries of them. (See further comments below.)	
21. Do you think that there are some activities on protected areas that your country has significant experience that will be of direct value to other Contracting Parties?	
a) no	
b) yes (please provide details)	X – The Atlas for Traditional Food Products in PAs is an important instrument to show the value of the use of biodiversity components.

Further comments

In Italy there is a quite comprehensive legislative framework for the identification, establishment and management of protected areas. In annex you will find a book that collects all the relevant texts in force at the time of publication (2001).

The first, and still the most important, law on PAs is the 394 of December 6th 1991 called “Framework Law on Protected Areas”. It provides the main principles for the establishment and management of protected areas in Italy in order to achieve the conservation of natural areas and the revival of the rich and diverse Italian natural heritage.

According to the framework law, the Ministry of Environment is responsible to prepare and maintain the official list of protected areas, which in its 4th release in 2002 (attached) lists 752 PAs; and 758 in its 5th release (in press).

The Framework law indicates the “Carta della Natura” (Nature Map) as the instrument for the assessment of the state of the environment in Italy. The Nature Map is presently under development and it will provide an analysis of all natural features in the whole country (not only in protected areas) and will identify vulnerable areas and threats to biodiversity conservation. In annex you will find a publication that presents the design and some of its preliminary results.

6 b)

There are national and regional funding to municipalities falling within a PA. Private enterprises and NGOs can also tap from these sources to provide services in line with the objectives of the PA.

Some incentive measures are also identified and implemented at local level, always supported by the Central Authority. Entrance fees are collected in some National Parks such as Abruzzo, Lazio e Molise NP, Gran Paradiso NP, Cinque Terre NP and Arcipelago della Maddalena NP and in some regional parks and marine protected areas. Other examples of incentive measures implemented in many areas are: licenses for guided tours, labeling of local products and labeling for tourism activities.

9 c)

Italy contains a wide range of different ecosystems that requires a diversity of approaches; there are different status for protected areas (see official list of PAs) identified by the different objectives and targets needed for each area; different bodies can be in charge for the management of PAs allowing for different management regimes.

10 c)

A consultative process is implemented for both identification and establishment of PAs. Local authorities, regional administrations, NGOs and other stakeholders are involved in this process. PAs are managed by independent bodies where stakeholders are represented. For instance, the Marine and Terrestrial Protected Area of Torre Guaceto is managed by a consortium formed by the two municipalities where the area is located and WWF Italy.

11 c)

The management body of a PA in Italy is usually independent and formed by representatives of different public and private organisations, apart from some which are managed by the State Forest Department.. Still, there are some areas managed by only one organisation such as an NGO, a University, a private foundation etc.

12 c)

Most PAs have adequate resources, both economic and human, for the main management needs. Still, many of them would benefit from an increase of such resources in order to improve their capacity and provide a better service to people and conservation. Additional resources would mainly be used for the identification and implementation of activities for sustainable development.

17 b)

Italy is a signatory of the Alps Convention, together with all the other countries included in the alpine ecoregion. All alpine PAs are included in the “Network of Alpine Protected Areas”. Italy, France and Monaco also established the Sanctuary for Marine Mammals to protect an important area for the reproduction of marine mammals. A twinning programme is also ongoing between Alpi Marittime Regional ark (Italy) and Mercantour NP (France).

20)

Many PAs in Italy are recognised under international agreements and conventions such as Ramsar, World Heritage Convention, Man and the Biosphere, EU Natura 2000 Network, Alps Convention, Protected Areas Diploma of Council of Europe, Biogenetic Reserves of Council of Europe.
