Online Policy Bootcamp Outcome Report

Interreg Euro-MED
MPA4Change
(Ref: Euro-MED0200736)

Interreg Euro-MED

Co-funded by the European Union

MPA4Change

- **Project:** Interreg Euro-MED *MPA4Change* (Ref. Euro-MED0200736)
- **Activity:** A2.2 – Policy & Advocacy
- **Event:** MPA4Change Online Policy Bootcamp
- **Date & time:** 17 December 2025 (10:00–12:30 CET)
- **Format:** Online (interactive plenary + breakout group work using Miro)
- **Recording**: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rj0zEokYUrA
- **Organised by:** EUROPARC Federation
- **Facilitated by:** Oceanogami OÜ (Patricia Puig Martí; María Giménez)

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1. Purpose of the bootcamp and expected outputs

The **MPA4Change Online Policy Bootcamp** was delivered under Activity A2.2 (Policy & Advocacy) with the objective of strengthening understanding, dialogue, and institutional uptake of climate adaptation actions in Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

Specifically, the bootcamp aimed to:

- Strengthen understanding of the **MPA4Change policy recommendations** on climate adaptation;
- Support participants in reflecting on **feasibility, barriers, and enabling conditions** in their own institutional and management contexts;
- Identify opportunities for **regional alignment and scaling** through the **100 MPA MedAlliance**.

As defined in the project workplan, the bootcamp contributes to the broader ambition of positioning MPAs as **Nature-based Solutions (NbS)** for climate adaptation and ensuring that validated tools and advocacy outputs are usable by **MPA managers, policymakers, and institutional actors**.

The expected output of this deliverable is a structured synthesis of:

(i) agenda and delivery,

(ii) key plenary messages,

(iii) breakout group outcomes,

(iv) participant questions, and

(v) follow-up actions feeding into ongoing policy and advocacy work.

2. Bootcamp agenda and session flow

2.1 Official agenda (as delivered)

Session overview (10:00–12:30 CET)

10:00–10:05	Welcome & agenda – P. Puig (Oceanogami)
10:05–10:15	Mediterranean Climate Emergency – E. Azzurro (CNR–IRBIM)
10:15–10:25	MPAs as Nature-based Solutions – Y. Arda (IUCN-Med)
10:25–10:35	Policy Recommendations for Climate Adaptation – P. Puig & M. Giménez (Oceanogami)
10:35–10:45	100 MPA MedAlliance & Policy Brief 2 – F. Pinillos (EUROPARC)
10:45–10:50	Q&A
10:50–11:00	Break
11:00–11:50	Interactive group session (breakouts) – Oceanogami & EUROPARC
11:50–12:10	Group feedback (rapporteurs)
12:10–12:20	Lighthouse case studies – L. Merotto & A. Blaskovic
12:20–12:25	Q&A
12:25–12:30	Wrap-up & next steps – P. Puig & EUROPARC

2.2 Session participation dynamics

Participants were encouraged to post questions in the chat throughout the session, with moderation clustering questions for dedicated Q&A moments. This approach allowed for continuous interaction while ensuring that key thematic issues were addressed in a structured and efficient manner during the plenary discussion.

An interactive segment was organised through the use of breakout groups, with two parallel groups formed to facilitate focused discussion. Each group was jointly facilitated by members of the Oceanogami and EUROPARC teams, using structured Miro boards to guide the exchange. The boards were designed to capture participants' inputs in a

consistent format, enabling both qualitative discussion and systematic documentation of feedback.

In total, 65 participants attended the Policy Bootcamp. Of these, 41 participants completed the online interaction and feedback components, providing information on their professional profiles and actively contributing to the discussions. The respondent group reflected a diverse range of stakeholder perspectives, comprising:

- 12 MPA managers and technical staff,
- 6 policymakers,
- 12 researchers, and
- 11 participants from other backgrounds, including NGOs, consultancies, and project practitioners.

This diversity of profiles enriched the discussions, allowing for cross-sectoral exchange between site-level practitioners, policy actors, and the scientific community. The balanced participation across stakeholder groups supported the objectives of the Policy Bootcamp by ensuring that both operational and policy-relevant perspectives were represented in the collective reflection on climate adaptation in Marine Protected Areas.

3. Training materials used

The bootcamp relied on the project's validated **training and advocacy package**, including:

- The main slide deck covering climate urgency, NbS framing, toolkits, and policy recommendations;
- **Factsheets on Climate Change Adaptation Toolkits**, used as action-oriented discussion prompts;
- Interactive **Miro boards** to support group work and synthesis;

- A structured approach linking technical toolkits to **policy frameworks and institutional entry points**.

Across plenary inputs, a central message was consistently reinforced:

Technical readiness exists within Mediterranean MPAs, while policy and institutional readiness remains uneven and requires targeted support.

4. Summary of plenary inputs and key messages

4.1 Mediterranean climate emergency (Ernesto Azzurro)

The opening scientific input highlighted the Mediterranean Sea as a climate hotspot, experiencing rapid warming and increasing frequency of extreme events. The presentation emphasised the implications of these trends for marine ecosystems and the urgency for adaptive management responses within MPAs.

This framing directly informed subsequent discussions, including participant questions on the feasibility of restoration under warming conditions, the management of invasive species, and uncertainty linked to future climate trajectories.

4.2 MPAs as Nature-based Solutions (Yaprak Arda)

The Nature-based Solutions framing was presented using internationally recognised definitions and principles, positioning MPAs as systems capable of delivering adaptation, resilience, and co-benefits for biodiversity and human well-being.

The discussion acknowledged that NbS in MPAs may include both protection and active interventions, and that governance, social acceptance, and long-term stewardship are central to their effectiveness.

4.3 Policy recommendations and scaling through the 100 MPA MedAlliance

The policy segment connected the **MPA4Change climate adaptation toolkits** with recurring structural challenges faced by MPAs, including limited mandates, fragmented governance, and unstable financing.

The **100 MPA MedAlliance** was presented as a mechanism to:

- Mobilise MPAs around a shared climate adaptation ambition;
- Support implementation through validated tools and expert support;
- Strengthen policy alignment at Mediterranean and EU levels.

5. Breakout group outcomes (Miro boards synthesis)

The interactive session invited participants to assess adaptation actions through a **feasibility versus impact lens**, and to identify barriers and enabling conditions.

5.1 Working Group 1 – From practice to policy: implementing adaptation in MPAs

Discussions prioritised actions that:

- Build on existing MPA operational routines (e.g. monitoring, data collection);
- Can be implemented incrementally and in partnership (e.g. citizen science);
- Are supported by regional networks and existing methodologies.

Lower feasibility was associated with actions requiring:

- High investment or specialised expertise;
- Clear national mandates or regulatory changes;
- Long time horizons under climate uncertainty.

Barriers highlighted included capacity constraints, unstable funding, and fragmented decision-making. Enablers included partnerships, regional support frameworks, and clearer policy signals legitimising action.

5.2 Working Group 2 – From policy to practice: enabling adaptation through governance and finance

This group focused on governance and financing levers. Discussions emphasised the need for:

- Integration of climate adaptation into formal MPA instruments (management plans, indicators);
- Predictable and dedicated financing mechanisms;
- Improved coordination across institutions and reporting systems.

Participants highlighted gaps between high-level strategies and operational guidance, reinforcing the need for clearer implementation pathways.

6. Participant questions and follow-up considerations

Participants raised substantive questions on:

- Climate impacts on restoration feasibility;
- Management of invasive species under warming scenarios;

- The role of active restoration as NbS;
- Geographic coverage and examples in the Southern Mediterranean;
- The scope of adaptation beyond natural heritage, including cultural heritage;
- Alignment between MPA4Change toolkits and existing tools (e.g. R-SAT);
- Challenges specific to cross-border MPAs.

Some questions were addressed during the session, while others were identified as requiring **post-bootcamp follow-up**. These questions provide valuable input for refining dissemination materials and identifying potential gaps or future work streams.

7. Key outcomes and implications for MPA4Change policy work

The bootcamp reinforced the project's central narrative:

MPAs can act now using validated tools, but scaling climate adaptation requires enabling policy, governance, and financing conditions.

Key implications include:

- Strengthening policy messaging around **enabling conditions**, not only technical solutions;
- Using breakout insights to refine factsheets and advocacy materials;
- Informing the mobilisation strategy of the **100 MPA MedAlliance**.

8. Next steps and follow-up actions

8.1 Immediate follow-up (post-bootcamp)

- Circulate training materials and factsheets to participants;
- Share a short Q&A follow-up note addressing outstanding questions;
- Provide information on continued engagement through the 100 MPA MedAlliance.

8.2 Internal integration into A2.2 outputs

- Feed breakout insights into ongoing policy dissemination;
- Consolidate key enabling conditions for institutional outreach;
- Use outcomes to support alignment with upcoming policy moments.

9. Annexes

Annex A. Bootcamp Agenda

MPA4Change Online Policy Bootcamp

- Title: *Marine Protected Areas: facing the climate emergency!*
- Project: Interreg Euro-MED MPA4Change (Ref. Euro-MED0200736)
- Activity: A2.2 – Policy and Advocacy
- Date: 17 December 2025
- Time: 10:00–12:30 CET
- Format: Online (Zoom)
- Organised by: EUROPARC Federation

- Facilitated by: Oceanogami OÜ

Agenda Overview

The Online Policy Bootcamp was designed as a 2.5-hour interactive session combining expert inputs, policy framing, and participatory group work. The agenda followed a progressive logic, moving from scientific evidence to policy implications, and finally to practical and governance-oriented reflection through breakout groups.

Detailed Agenda

Time (CET)	Session	Description	Speaker / Facilitator
10:00 – 10:05	**Welcome and Agenda Overview**	Opening of the session, welcome of participants, presentation of objectives and agenda structure.	***Patricia Puig Martí (Oceanogami)***
10:05 – 10:15	**The Mediterranean Climate Emergency**	Scientific overview of climate change trends and impacts in the Mediterranean Sea, highlighting vulnerabilities relevant to MPAs.	***Dr. Ernesto Azzurro – Research Director, CNR–IRBIM***
10:15 – 10:25	**MPAs as Nature-Based Solutions for Climate Adaptation**	Presentation of the role of MPAs as Nature-based Solutions (NbS), including ecological and socio-economic benefits and governance considerations.	***Yaprak Arda (IUCN-Med)***
10:25 – 10:35	**Policy Recommendations for Climate Adaptation in MPAs**	Introduction to the MPA4Change project, its climate adaptation toolkits, and key policy recommendations, with a focus on enabling conditions for implementation.	***Patricia Puig Martí & María Giménez (Oceanogami)***

10:35 – 10:45	**From Policy Vision to Practice: the 100 MPA MedAlliance**	Presentation of the 100 MPA MedAlliance as a mechanism to scale climate adaptation planning and action across Mediterranean MPAs, aligned with EU and regional frameworks.	***Fernando Pinillos (EUROPARC Federation)***
10:45 – 10:50	**Questions & Answers**	Open Q&A session following the first set of presentations.	***All speakers***
10:50 – 11:00	**Short Pause / Transition**	Brief break and transition to the interactive part of the session.	**—**
11:00 – 11:50	**Interactive Group Session: Feasibility of Climate Adaptation in Mediterranean MPAs**	Breakout group discussions using a Feasibility vs Impact Matrix to assess adaptation actions, barriers, and enabling conditions.	***Facilitated by Oceanogami & EUROPARC team***
11:50 – 12:10	**Feedback from Groups**	Plenary reporting by group rapporteurs, highlighting key discussion points, barriers, enablers, and priority actions.	***Rapporteurs from each working group***
12:10 – 12:20	**Lighthouse Case Studies: Portofino and Brijuni MPAs**	Presentation of concrete examples illustrating monitoring, adaptation, and participatory approaches implemented in Mediterranean MPAs.	***Lorenzo Merotto (Portofino MPA) & Andrea Blašković (Brijuni MPA)***
12:20 – 12:25	**Questions & Answers**	Open discussion following the case studies.	***All***

12:25 – 12:30	**Wrap-up and Next Steps**	Summary of key messages, explanation of follow-up actions, and closing of the Bootcamp.	***Patricia Puig Martí & EUROPARC Federation***

Annex B. Participant Questions and Follow-up Needs

This annex summarises the questions raised by participants during the MPA4Change Online Policy Bootcamp (17 December 2025) and indicates whether they were addressed during the live session or identified as requiring post-bootcamp follow-up, based on a review of the session transcript and moderated discussion.

B.1 Questions addressed during the session

The following questions were addressed during plenary discussions and/or the moderated Q&A segments:

1. **Climate impacts on restoration feasibility**
   a. Participants asked how rising sea temperatures may affect restoration activities such as seagrass planting.
   b. Status: Addressed through scientific input highlighting the need to integrate current and projected climate conditions into restoration planning.

2. **Management of invasive species under warming scenarios**
   a. Participants questioned whether management should aim to combat invasive species or adapt to a “new normal”.
   b. Status: Addressed at a conceptual level, noting the complexity of invasive species dynamics under climate change and the need for adaptive, context-specific management strategies.

3. **Active restoration as a Nature-based Solution (NbS)**
   a. Participants queried whether active restoration qualifies as NbS and the role of human intervention.
   b. Status: Addressed through clarification that active restoration can constitute NbS when aligned with recognised NbS standards and principles.

4. **Examples from the Southern Mediterranean**
   a. Participants asked about pilot studies or experiences in Southern Mediterranean countries (e.g. Morocco).
   b. Status: Partially addressed, with reference to regional initiatives and projects, though without detailed site-specific examples.

5. **Role of MPA managers in a global climate context**
   a. Participants raised concerns about the limited ability of local managers to influence global climate drivers.
   b. Status: Addressed through discussion on the importance of local action, including reducing non-climate stressors and strengthening ecosystem resilience.

B.2 Questions not addressed during the session

The following questions were raised by participants but were not addressed during the live session and were therefore identified as priorities for post-bootcamp clarification and future work:

1. **Scope of adaptation beyond natural heritage**
   a. To what extent do the MPA4Change toolkits and workshops integrate approaches to address climate change impacts on marine cultural heritage within MPAs?
   b. Status: Not addressed during the session.

2. **Alignment with existing tools and methodologies (e.g. R-SAT)**
   a. How do the MPA4Change toolkits relate to or build upon previously developed tools such as the Resilience Self-Assessment Tool (R-SAT)?
   b. Status: Not addressed during the session.

3. **Cross-border MPAs**
   a. Are there specific recommendations or tailored approaches for cross-border Marine Protected Areas, where governance and coordination challenges differ?
   b. Status: Not addressed during the session.

B.3 Implications for follow-up and future work

Unanswered questions highlight important areas for clarification and potential future development, including:

- Broadening adaptation discussions to include marine cultural heritage where relevant;
- Improving transparency and communication on how MPA4Change toolkits complement existing tools;
- Exploring governance and adaptation challenges specific to cross-border MPAs.

These questions provide valuable input for post-bootcamp follow-up communication, future guidance materials, and potential refinements of policy and advocacy outputs under Activity A2.2.

Annex C. Bootcamp's Miro boards

- WG1 - From Practice to Policy
  - Activity A - Adaptation Actions for Climate Change in MPAs
  - Activity B - Feasibility vs Impact Maxtrix
  - Activity C - Discussion Questions
  - Activity D - Evidence of Enabling Policy & Governance
  - Activity E - Group Synthesis
  - Activity F - Key Messages for Plenary
- WG2 - From Policy to practise (facilitator: María Gimenez)
  - Activity A - Adaptation Actions for Climate Change in MPAs
  - Activity B - Feasibility vs Impact Maxtrix
  - Activity C - Discussion Questions
  - Activity D - Evidence of Enabling Policy & Governance
  - Activity E - Group Synthesis
  - Activity F - Key Messages for Plenary

WG1 - From Practice to Policy (facilitator: Patricia Puig)

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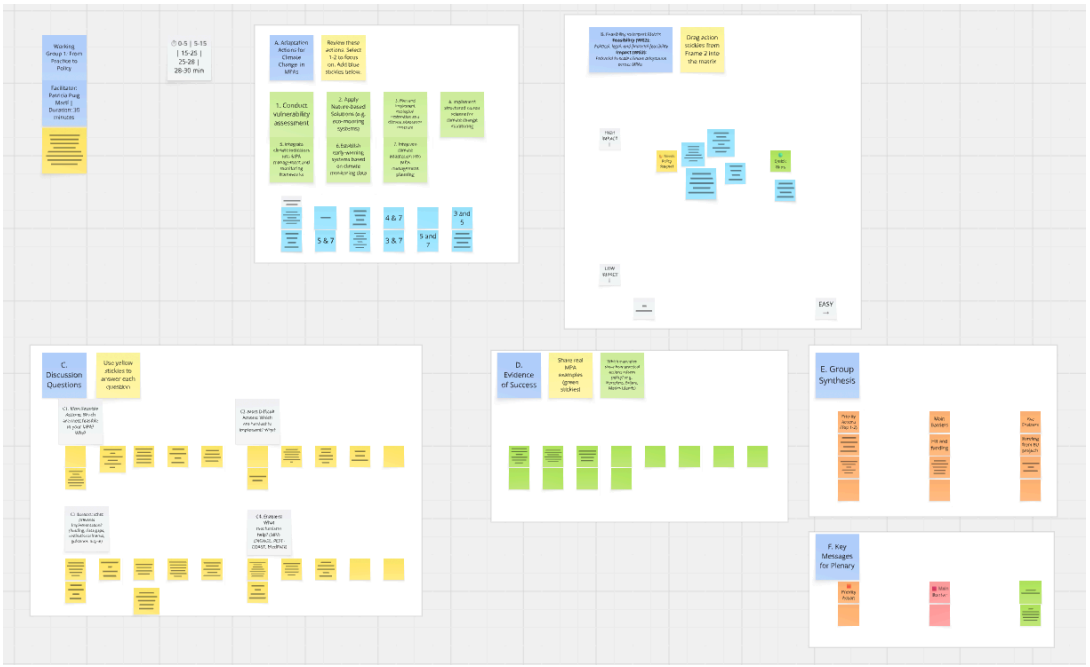
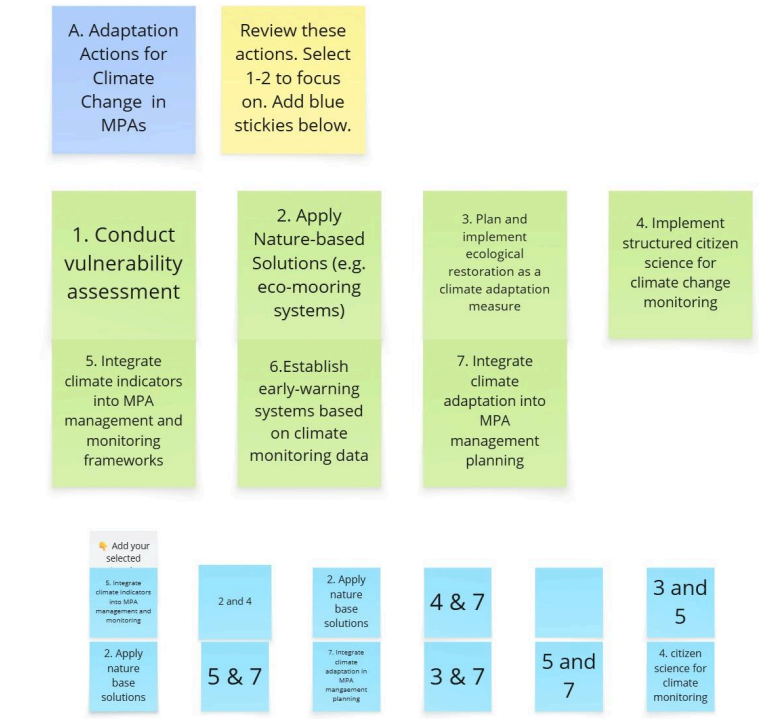
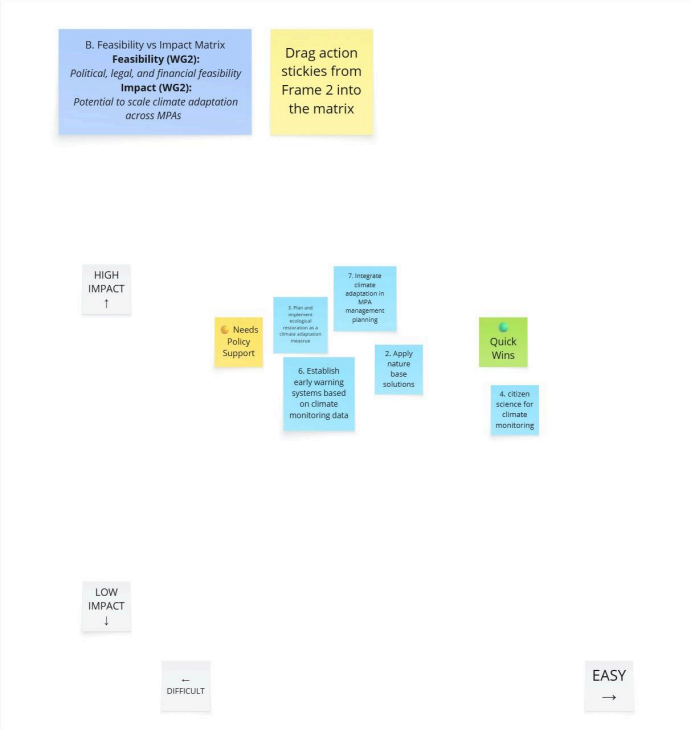


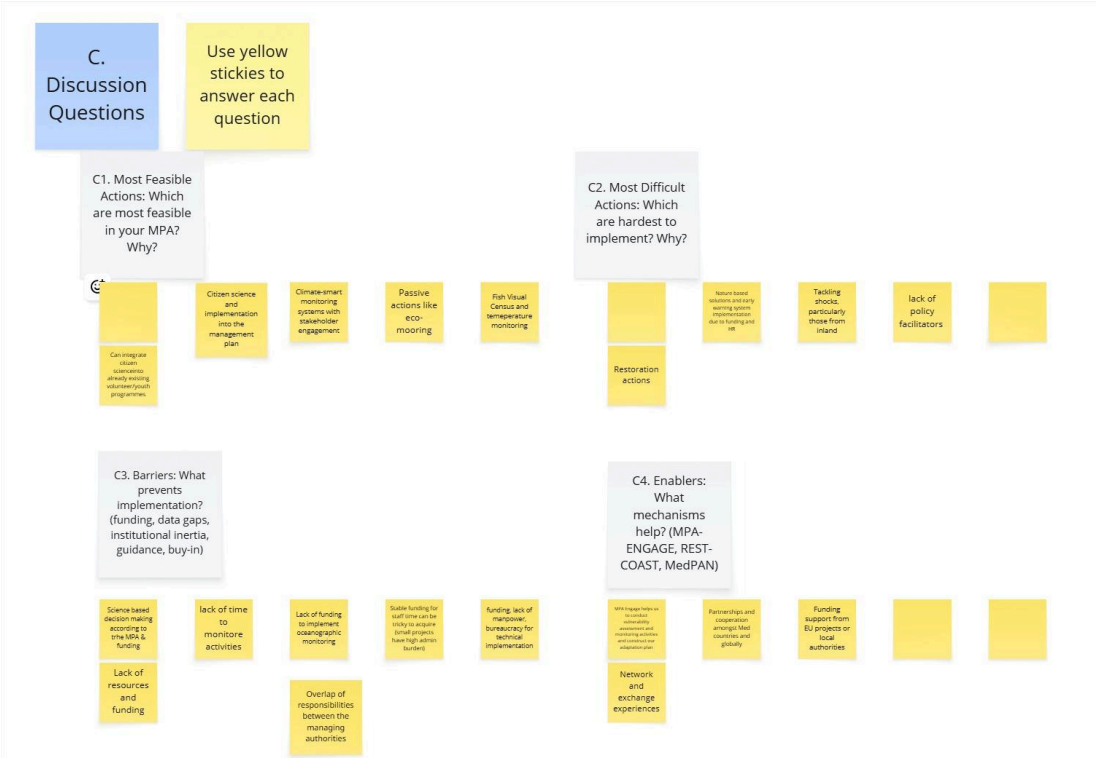
Activity A - Adaptation Actions for Climate Change in MPAs



Activity B - Feasibility vs Impact Maxtrix



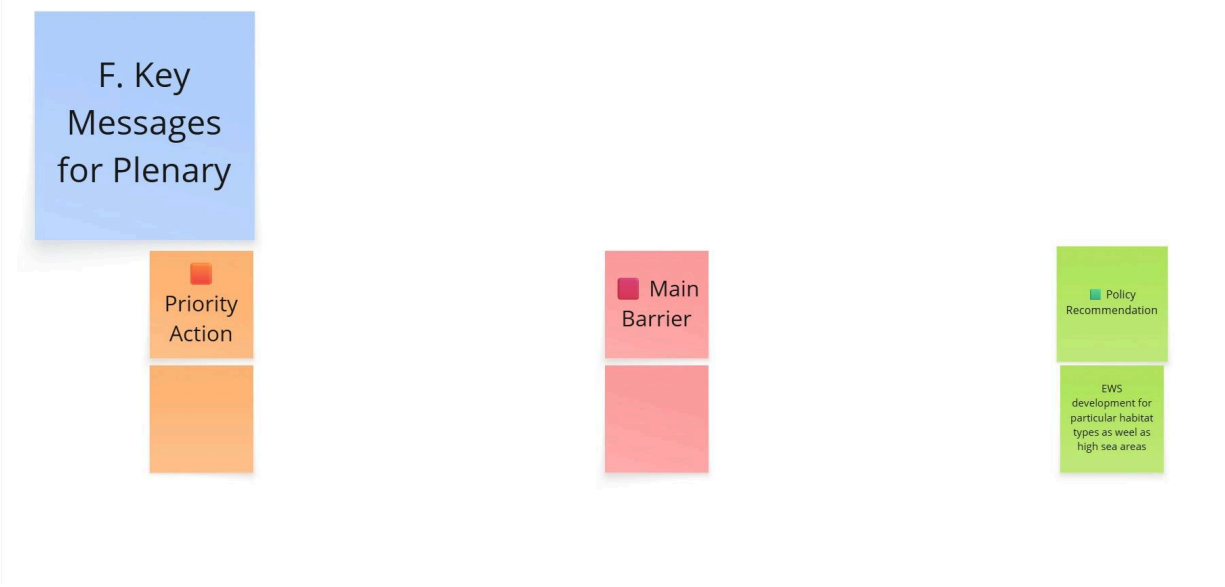
Activity C - Discussion Questions



Activity D - Evidence of Enabling Policy & Governance

Activity E - Group Synthesis

Activity F - Key Messages for Plenary



WG2 - From Policy to practise (facilitator: María Gimenez)

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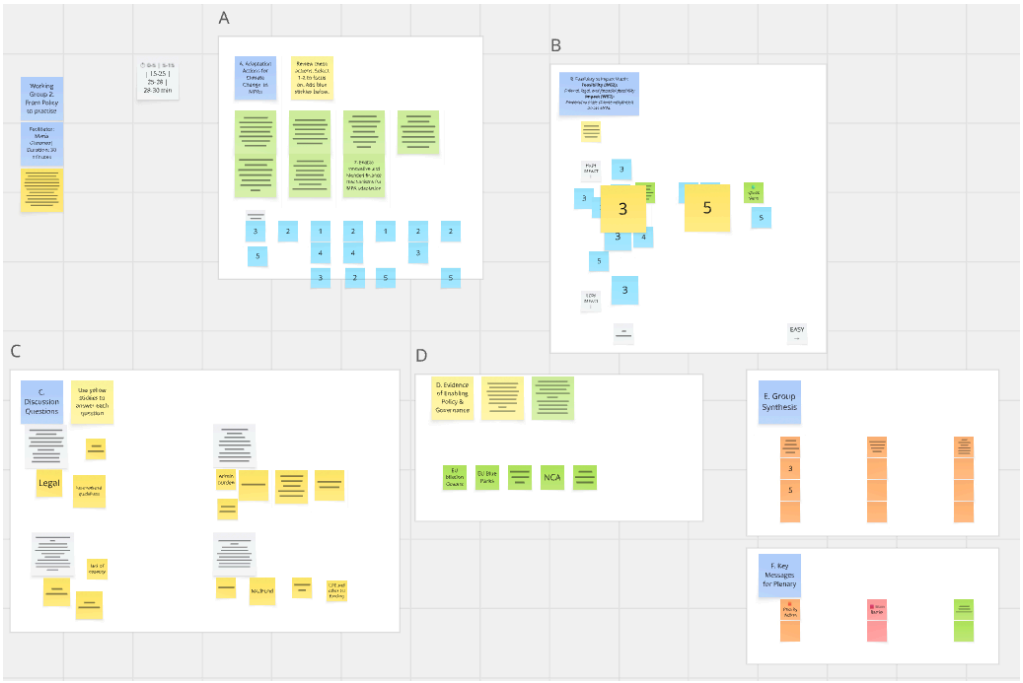
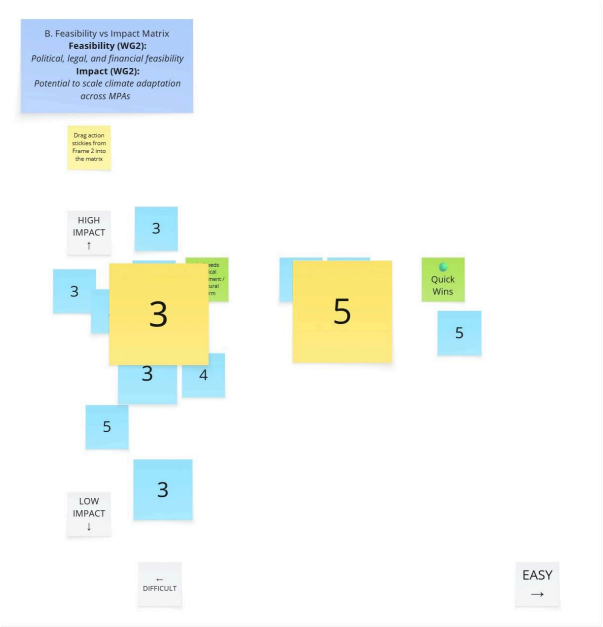
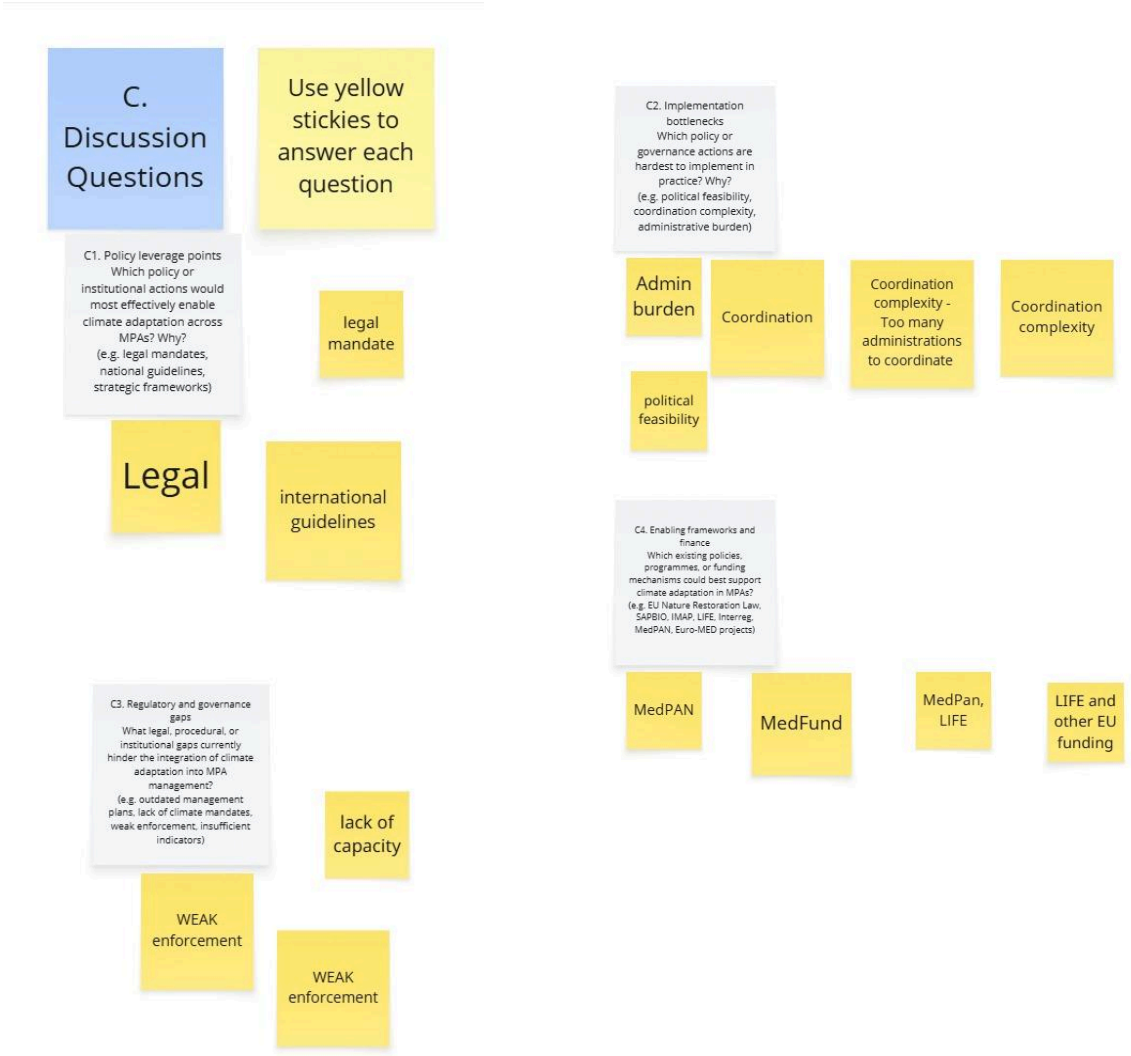


Activity A - Adaptation Actions for Climate Change in MPAs

Activity B - Feasibility vs Impact Matrix

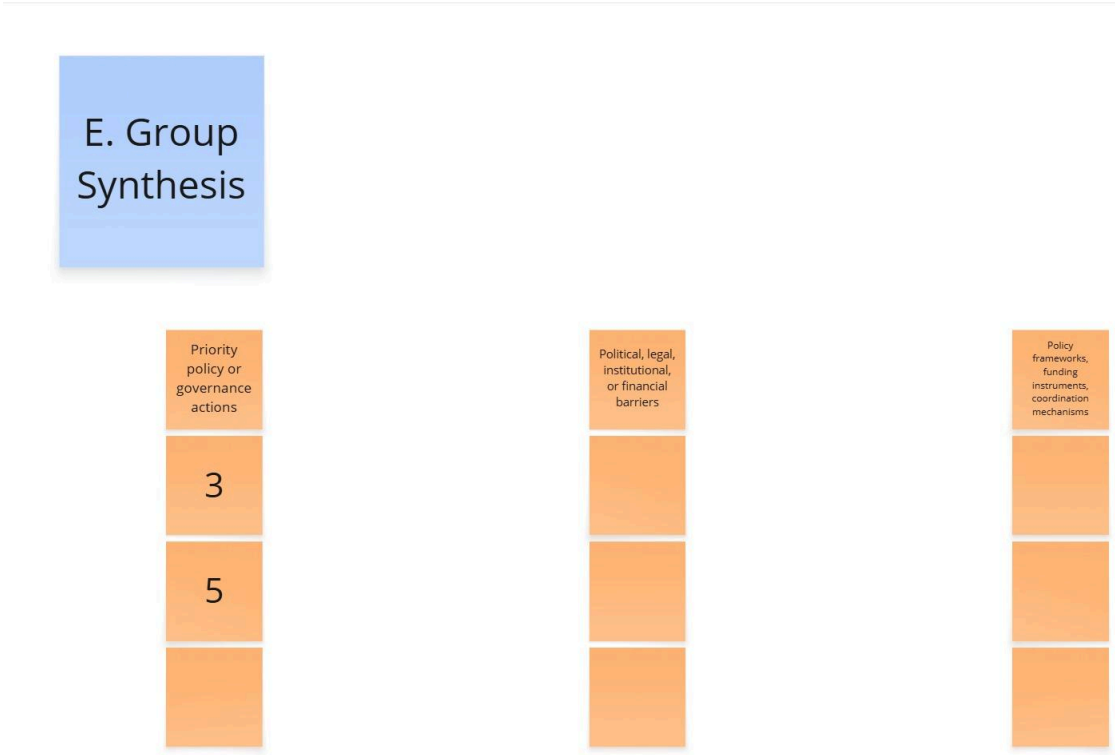


Activity C - Discussion Questions

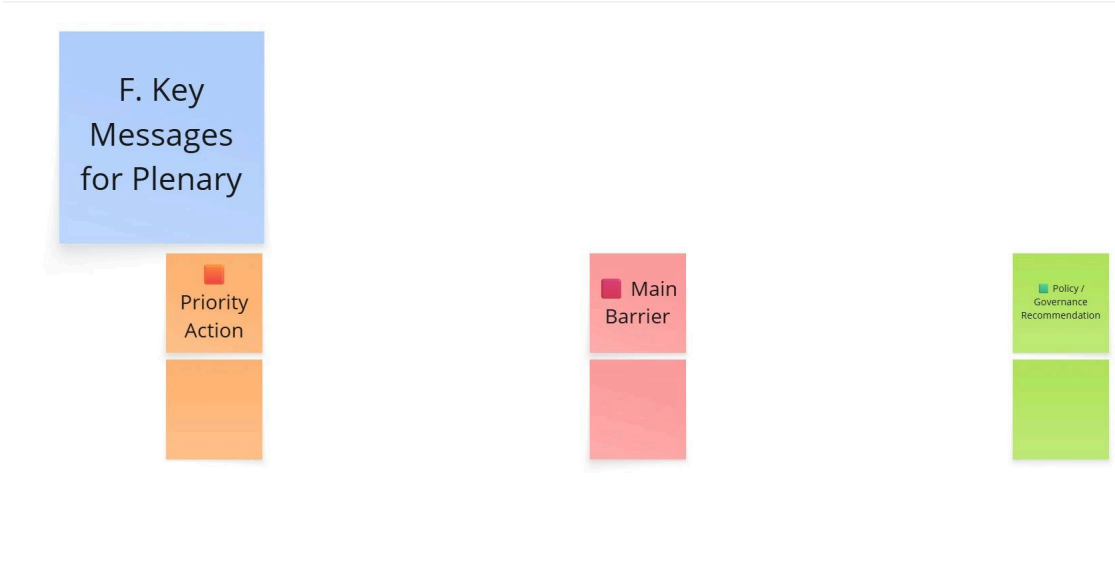


Activity D - Evidence of Enabling Policy & Governance

Activity E - Group Synthesis



Activity F - Key Messages for Plenary



Annex D. Links to resources

Main resources

- Registration link with resources: https://mpa4change-policy-bootcamp.grwebsite.eu/
- Policy brief 1: https://mpa4change.interreg-euro-med.eu/wp-content/uploads/sites/77/mpa4change-policy-brief-100mpa_medalliance_28.11.pdf
- Factsheets: https://mpa4change.interreg-euro-med.eu/wp-content/uploads/sites/77/factsheets-on-climate-change-adaptation-toolkits-mpa4change_16.12.2025.pdf

Other project materials

- Vulnerability assessment guidelines:
- https://mpa-engage.interreg-med.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Sites/Biodiversity_Protection/Projects/MPA_Engage/Toolbox/MPA-Engage_D4.2.1_Vulnerability_Assessment_Guidelines.pdf
- Vulnerability assessment plans: https://mpa-engage.interreg-med.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Sites/Biodiversity_Protection/Projects/MPA_Engage/Toolbox/D3.8.8_Joint_Vulnerability_assessment_plans.docx.pdf

- E-learning materials vulnerability assessment: https://mpa-engage.interreg-med.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Sites/Biodiversity_Protection/Projects/MPA_Engage/Library/Webinars_Unit_2/Unit_2_Vulnerability_Webinars.pdf
- Vulnerability assessment tool for mediterranean MPAs: https://futureoceanslab.org/vulnerability-tool/
- Citizen science plan:
- https://mpa-engage.interreg-med.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Sites/Biodiversity_Protection/Projects/MPA_Engage/Toolbox/Joint_Citizen_Science_Plan.pdf
- Monitoring protocols for divers:
- https://mpa-engage.interreg-med.eu/index.php?id=11731&tx_elibrary_pi1%5Blivrable%5D=14115&tx_elibrary_pi1%5Baction%5D=show&tx_elibrary_pi1%5Bcontroller%5D=Frontend%5CLivrable&cHash=195c55965a5f39fe4c57cbbe0a428715e

- E-learning materials citizen science: google.com/url?sa=D&q=https://mpa-engage.interreg-med.eu/index.php%3Fid%3D14033&ust=1766076180000000&usg=AOvVaw25XYFBq9Z5nt8jthyBaAwe&hl=es&source=gmail
- Adaptation and mitigation guidelines: https://mpa-engage.interreg-med.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Sites/Biodiversity_Protection/Projects/MPA_Engage/D_4_6_1_Template_and_Guidelines_to_develop_a_local_Adaptation_Plan.pdf
- Joint plan for climate change adaptation:
- https://mpa-engage.interreg-med.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Sites/Biodiversity_Protection/Projects/MPA_Engage/Library/WP3/D.3.7.8_Joint_CC_Adaptation_Plan_FINAL.pdf
- E-learning materials adaptation and mitigation: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KqFIFdmx5HXrNLTJHYjX84nnqPX8pbky/view
- Guidelines participatory approach: https://backend.interreg-med.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Sites/Biodiversity_Protection/Projects/MPA_Engage/Library/WP5/D.5.4.2_OPERATIONAL_GUIDE_FINAL.pdf
- Syntesis participatory approach: https://backend.interreg-med.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Sites/Biodiversity_Protection/Projects/MPA_Engage/Toolbox/D.3.6.8_Participatory_Approach_Final_Synthesis_Report.pdf
- MPA4change website: https://mpa-engage.interreg-med.eu/
- Marine Protected Areas facing climate change booklet: google.com/url?sa=D&q=https://mpa-engage.interreg-med.eu/what-we-achieve/boiling-mediterranean-booklet/&ust=1766076180000000&usg=AOvVaw1qNF43rMCbtgCvcxKN9FUx&hl=es&source=gmail
- Communication materials on climate change: google.com/url?sa=D&q=https://mpa-engage.interreg-med.eu/toolbox/communication-materials/&ust=1766076180000000&usg=AOvVaw3AZqVMeZYYDIQj3mye-G0p&hl=es&source=gmail
- Video materials: https://mpa-engage.interreg-med.eu/videos/med-together/