Macro-regional cooperation in the Mediterranean: processes and perspectives

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Understanding the Mediterranean macro-regional context
In a singular Cooperative Region ...

Networks and Platforms
- EPM
- CRPM-CIM
- MedCities
- Adriatic-Ionian Euroregion
- MCA

New science diplomacy networks
- PRIMA
- BETA
- CREF
- MedWeaves

Transnational programmes
- Interreg Euromed
- Interreg Next Med

Med Cooperative Frames

Basin Initiatives
- Macrolegion Med
- West Med Sea Basin Strategy
- EUSAIR macroregion

Institutions
- ARLEM
- UfM
With 2 major sea basin strategic approaches ...

- **WestMed initiative** 2017 was launched by the UfM with the support of the European Commission. Concerns the 10 countries from the Western Mediterranean: France, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Malta, Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia.
  
  Objective: to facilitate exchanges and joint projects on the challenges of the blue economy.

- **EUSAIR macroregion** 2014: covers 9 countries: 4 EU Member States (Croatia, Greece, Italy, Slovenia) and 5 non-EU countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia).
  
  Objective: to promote economic and social prosperity and growth in the region by improving its attractiveness, competitiveness and connectivity.
The Med macroregional strategy proposal
Long (unfinished) process: Since the 2010, EU institutions and various public actors have speculated on how to apply an integrated macro-regional approach to the Mediterranean.

Bottom-up approach: Regional and Local actors through the networks promote this approach.  
- ARLEM report promoted by the network of peripheral and maritime regions (CRPM), on a cohesion policy for the Mediterranean, which explicitly called for a single and integrated macro-regional strategy for the entire Mediterranean (CRPM-CIM, 2014).
- It has been relaunched, promoted by the MCA platform, launching the Friends of the Med Macroregion with the aim of being able to establish a space of collaborative governance between the territories of the EU and the Mediterranean basin. (MCA, 2021-2023)

Institutional Engagement
- Committee of the Regions with the approval of an Opinion on the Mediterranean Macroregion (CoR, 2022).
- European Parliament, the debate on the potential creation of a macro-region is strongly relaunched, in its report on macro-regional strategies in the Mediterranean (European Parliament, 2021) and more recently referring to the impact of climate change (Alfonsi, François, 2023).
With a significant multi-scale Network support

- **CRPM /CIM**
  CPMR Policy Position on the future of macro-regional and sea basin strategies Political Bureau, March 25 2022, Barcelona, CIM Presidency lobby

- **MedCoopAlliance**
  Session to debate on the CoR Opinion “Towards a Macro-regional Strategy in the Mediterranean” in the frame of the European Week of Regions and Cities, October 2022, Brussels

- **Euroregion Pyrenees-Mediterranean**
  Presidents Declaration on the Med Macroregion, Toulouse, Plenary Meeting, February 10, 2023

- **The Community of Friends of the Med Macroregion**
  launched in Brussels April 2023 open to all the med actors
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(*) From the ICM-CRPM opinion on a Macro-regional strategy on the Mediterranean, CoR stakeholders' consultation 2022
The Med macroregion as Cooperative Governance laboratory
The Cooperative Governance (*)

(*) Preliminary results of an on-going research on Macroregional Cooperative Governance in the Mediterranean (EAPC-Barcelona 2023)
Med macroregion main Challenges ...

LABORATORY OF COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE
- Political implication for a transnational vision
- Actors with different interests and priorities.
- Strategic will and functional collaborative means

HORIZONTAL GOVERNANCE AS A MAIN CHALLENGE
- (3 no) founding, structure and legislation
- Ownership of the LRA and Network Platforms
- Technical and Strategic Secretariat for Cooperative Initiatives

TECHNICAL VERSUS LEGITIMACY PROCESS
- Limited Mechanisms of incorporation of civil society
- Risk of legitimacy deficit
- Europe remains the primary context of its external territorial governance.

FOCUS GLOBAL PROGRAMMES WITH INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH
- The Euro-Mediterranean agenda covers a wide range of thematic areas and makes focused action difficult
- Set of difficult Priorities: climate change, humanitarian and digital transition
- Intersectional approach lacks concreteness
The macrorregional strategy in perspective
A dynamic and progressive model (*)

(*) Preliminary results of an ongoing research on Macroregional Cooperative Governance in the Mediterranean (EAPC-Barcelona 2023)
Improving Cooperative Governance

In a context of plurality of actors and initiatives, the Macro-Region will serve as a multi-level governance framework to channel and converge the foreign action focused on the Mediterranean.

The Mediterranean requires for a new mechanism to increase and improve coordination with Mediterranean organisations, assemblies and networks.

Promotion of synergies between different strategic approaches on governance (including macro-regions and sea basin strategies or the cohesion policy for the Mediterranean).

Development of joint projects and reflections on the future of territorial cooperation.

Reinforcing Transnational approach

Supportive activity to the Neighbourhood Policy and territorial cooperation tools available in the basin. Activities supporting the emergence of a "Mediterranean of projects", decentralised and south-south cooperation, and Mediterranean Southern countries’ decentralisation.