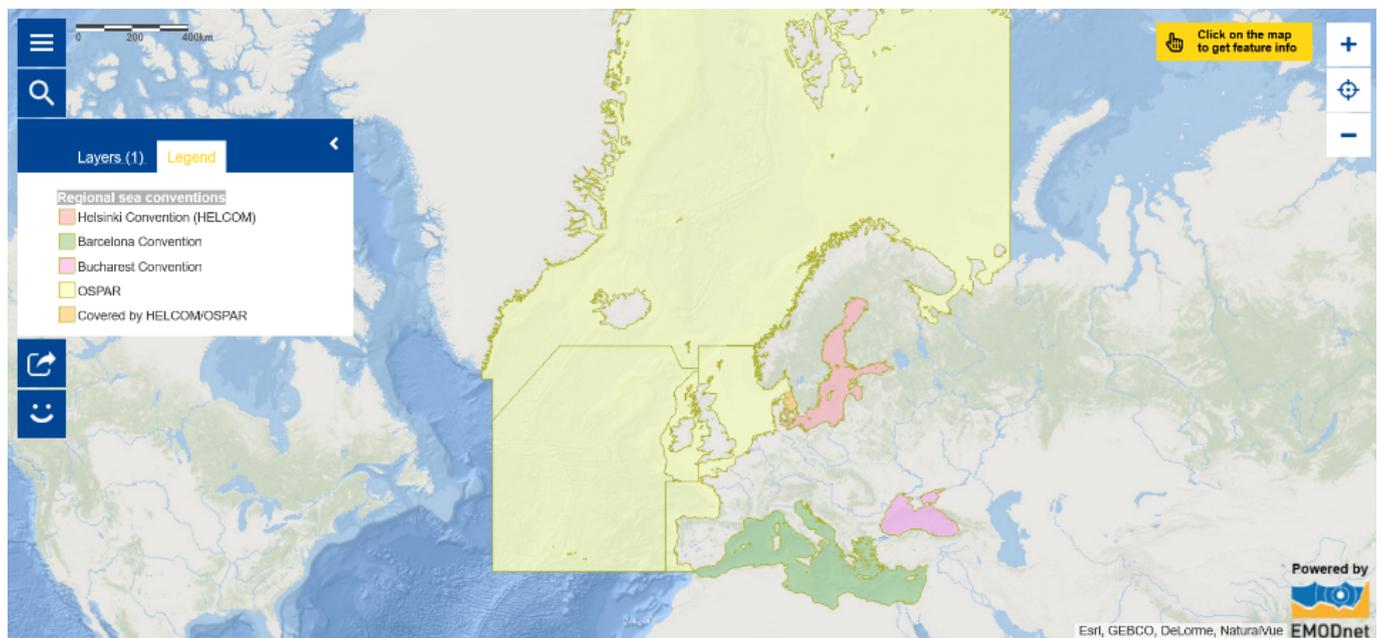# Map of the Week – Regional Sea Conventions

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The Map of the Week shows the maritime regions covered by the Regional Sea Conventions (Helsinki Convention, Barcelona Convention, Bucharest Convention and OSPAR Convention) on the protection of the marine environment.

Did you know that the Mediterranean Action Plan [1] (MAP) has celebrated the 45th anniversary of regional cooperation dedicated to the marine and coastal environment and sustainable development in the framework of the Barcelona Convention? The Mediterranean Action Plan was established in 1975 as a multilateral environmental agreement in the context of the Regional Seas Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme [2] (UNEP). It brings together 21 Mediterranean Countries and the European Union. Under the auspices of UNEP/MAP, a framework convention dedicated to the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution was adopted in 1976. It was amended two decades later to encompass the key concepts adopted at the landmark 1992 Rio Conference and to include coasts in its scope. The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean – the Barcelona Convention [3] - was adopted in 1995.

This anniversary was marked at the 22nd Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (COP 22 [4]) which took place on 7-10 December 2021 in Antalya, Turkey. COP 22 saw the adoption of a package of action-oriented decisions to protect the

Mediterranean marine and coastal environment and strengthen sustainable development, including [1] [5]]:

- A groundbreaking decision on the Designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as an Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides pursuant to Annex VI to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL); [6]
- The Post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region; [7]
- Decisions related to land- and sea-based pollution; and
- A set of regional measures to support the development of green and circular businesses and to strengthen the demand for more sustainable products.

The Contracting Parties also gave the green light to the Medium-Term Strategy (2022-2027) of the United Nations Environment Programme's Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP).

The Barcelona Convention is one of the four Regional Sea Conventions in Europe. Regional Sea Conventions are cooperation structures which aim to protect the marine environment and bring together Member States and neighbouring countries that share marine waters. The other three Regional Sea Conventions are the Helsinki Convention [8], the Bucharest Convention [9] and the OSPAR Convention [10]. Explore the Map of the Week to see the maritime regions covered by each Regional Sea Convention.

Access the map [11]

The data in this map are provided by the European Commission [12].

[1 [5]]

https://www.unep.org/unepmap/news/press-release/barcelona-convention-cop-22-adopts-bold-measures-protection-marine-and-coastal [5]

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[11]
https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/atlas/maritime_atlas/#lang=EN;p=w;bkgd=5;theme=22:0.8;c=-6246
50.1895485055,9264050.451721001;z=3;e=t

[12] https://ec.europa.eu/info/departments/maritime-affairs-and-fisheries_en