



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

SPATIAL PLAN OF THE EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA IN THE ADRIATIC SEA

CROSS-BORDER CONSULTATIONS - PLAN SUMMARY

July 2025

REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

MINISTRY OF PHYSICAL PLANNING, CONSTRUCTION AND STATE ASSETS

Plan Name

SPATIAL PLAN OF THE EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA IN THE ADRIATIC SEA

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Note: The original Spatial Plan of the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Croatia is in Croatian. The Croatian language is authoritative version.

INTRODUCTION

The sea and marine environment are strategically significant to the Republic of Croatia and proclaiming the Exclusive Economic Zone (hereinafter referred to as: the EEZ) in the Adriatic Sea, as well as developing the spatial plan for this area, is key for ensuring sustainable development, environmental protection, the protection of marine habitats and species and the conservation of marine protected areas.

The prerequisites for launching the development of the Spatial Plan of the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Croatia in the Adriatic Sea (hereinafter referred to as: the Plan) were achieved by adopting the Decision on the proclamation of the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Croatia in the Adriatic Sea (Official Gazette 10/2021) and the Act on Amendments to the Physical Planning Act (Official Gazette 67/2023).

Pursuant to the Physical Planning Act (Official Gazette 153/2013, 65/2017, 114/2018, 39/2019, 98/2019 and 67/2023, hereinafter referred to as: the Physical Planning Act), this Plan constitutes a spatial plan of areas with special features and is adopted by the Croatian Parliament. The competent development authority of the Plan is the Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets (hereinafter referred to as: the Ministry). The duties of the competent development authority of the Plan are performed by the Directorate for Physical Planning of the Ministry, while the expert developer is the Institute for Spatial Development of the Ministry.

The process of developing the Plan started by adopting the Decision on the development of the Spatial Plan of the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Croatia in the Adriatic Sea (Official Gazette 2/2024, hereinafter referred to as: the Decision on development). Based on the Decision on development, the framework of activities considered in the development of the Plan is related to the activities and protection of:

- aquaculture areas
- fishing areas
- installations and infrastructure for the exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons in the northern Adriatic
- maritime transport routes and traffic flows
- military training areas
- nature and species conservation sites and marine protected areas
- scientific research
- submarine cables and pipelines
- underwater cultural heritage.

While considering the activities within the EEZ, the interaction with the territorial sea, internal sea waters and coastal zone was considered. Activities in the EEZ area, as well as the requests of public law bodies for the use of that area which are not aligned with the Decision on development, were not considered while determining planning solutions. Based on the determined physical planning starting points and objectives, as well as the suggested methodology, the planning solutions were evaluated in collaboration with sectors through a cross-sectoral expert group established to monitor the implementation of the Directive 2014/89/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning (OJ L 257, 28.8.2014, hereinafter referred to as: MSP Directive) and through cross-sectoral expert consultation with public law bodies which are obliged to participate in the process according to the Decision on development.

Potential impacts of planned activities on the marine environment were assessed through the procedure of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Plan (hereinafter referred to as: the SEA), within which a main assessment of acceptability for the ecological network was also conducted.

For the purpose of developing the Plan, a study called “Expert-analytical work as part of the preparatory works for the development of the Spatial Plan of the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Croatia in the Adriatic Sea” was developed.

STARTING POINTS

Spatial plans in the Republic of Croatia have the authority and legal status of subordinate legislation. Every project must be conducted in accordance with the spatial plan or the relevant implementing act, except in cases specified by the Physical Planning Act.

The Plan is developed and adopted on the basis of the Physical Planning Act, which aligns with the international and European legal framework. In the EEZ area, the Physical Planning Act does not provide for the development of a lower-level spatial plan. The Plan designated areas within which certain activities can be carried out and prescribes the implementation provisions.

The starting points of the Plan are contained in valid physical planning documents which encompass the marine area of the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Croatia: Spatial Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia (Official Gazette 106/2017, hereinafter referred to as: the Strategy), Physical Planning Programme of the Republic of Croatia (Official Gazette 50/1999, 84/2013, hereinafter referred to as: the Programme) and spatial plans bordering the EEZ.

In the Strategy, the sea is marked as a significant factor of the overall state development, and the EEZ space is considered, according to the period of development and adoption, through the area of protected ecological and fisheries zone and the continental shelf.

The Programme is a physical planning document which, within the new physical planning system, represents a document of transitional nature and remains in force until the adoption of the Spatial Plan of the Exclusive Economic Zone and the State Plan for Spatial Development. The Programme determines measures and activities for the implementation of strategies and defines fundamental rules, criteria and conditions for physical planning at the state, regional and local level, provided that they are aligned with the Strategy.

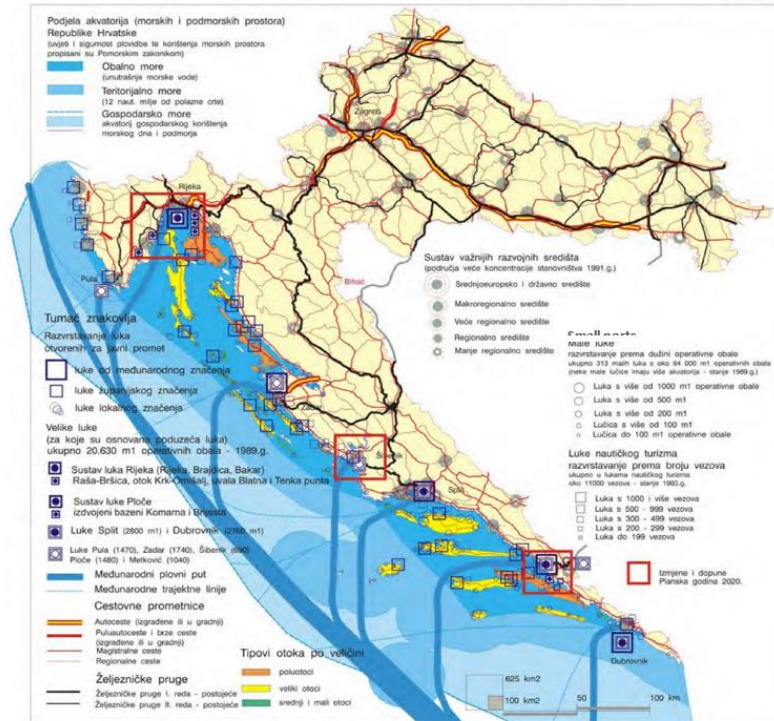


Image 1 – Physical Planning Programme of the Republic of Croatia

Source: <https://mpgi.gov.hr/o-ministarstvu/djelokrug-50/prostorno-uredjenje-3335/program-prostornog-uredjenja-republike-hrvatske/9125>

Scope of the Plan

The Plan is developed for the entire EEZ area, which comprises the maritime space from the outer boundary of the territorial sea seaward up to the maximum boundary allowed under general international law.

The outer EEZ boundary towards Italy is determined by the agreement between the Republic of Croatia and the Italian Republic on the delimitation of exclusive economic zones signed on May 22, 2022 in Rome and ratified in the Croatian Parliament. The outer EEZ boundary with Montenegro, until the conclusion of an international agreement on delimitation, temporarily follows the direction of and continues along the provisional delimitation line of the territorial seas determined by the 2002 Protocol between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on the Interim Regime along the Southern Border between the Two States.



Image 2 – Scope of the Plan

Source: Decision on the development of the Spatial Plan of the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Croatia in the Adriatic Sea

The EEZ area is irregularly shaped, divided into two areas by the territorial sea near the Palagruža island. The northern part encompasses approximately 14,917 km² and the southern part 8,921 km², which amounts to a total of approximately 23,838 km². The Adriatic Sea is a relatively shallow, semi-enclosed pool with the deepest part being 1,233 m in the South Adriatic Basin.

The EEZ area involves activities of fishing, exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons, scientific research and maritime and air traffic.

Moreover, the EEZ includes areas for the disposal of unexploded ordnance, energy and communications cables and sunken wrecks.

Rights and obligations of the Republic of Croatia in the EEZ

The Decision on the proclamation of the EEZ determines the following, relevant for the development of the Plan:

- the EEZ scope
- the application of the legal regime in the EEZ in accordance with relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (hereinafter referred to as: UNCLOS) and the legislation of the European Union
- the EEZ is a maritime space where all states enjoy the ensured freedoms of navigation and overflight, laying of submarine cables and pipelines and other maritime uses under international law, without prejudice to the sovereign rights and jurisdiction of the Republic of Croatia
- the cooperation of the Republic of Croatia with all Adriatic and coastal Mediterranean states in order to protect and conserve, through concerted practices, the natural resources of the sea and of the marine environment of the Adriatic and the entire Mediterranean.

The proclamation of the EEZ enables the Republic of Croatia to manage the natural resources in the area, including fisheries resources and mineral raw materials, but it also determines the obligation to implement measures for marine environmental protection.

The application of the EEZ legal regime is conducted in accordance with the relevant provisions of UNCLOS, as implemented in the Maritime Code, and the relevant European legislation (namely in the area of the conservation of the marine environment and habitats and the European Union Common Fisheries Policy).

In accordance with the Maritime Code, in the EEZ the Republic of Croatia has sovereign rights of exploration and exploitation, conservation and management of natural resources, whether living or non-living, and of energy production using the sea, currents and winds. The jurisdiction of the Republic of Croatia in the EEZ refers to the establishment and use of artificial islands, installations and structures at the sea, scientific research of the sea and the protection and conservation of the marine environment.

The proclamation of the EEZ excludes third countries from fishing, but not the EU Member States.

The UN General Assembly proclaimed the period from 2021 to 2030 as the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration with the aim of preventing and stopping ecosystem degradation and fostering their restoration. The main tools to implement this objective are the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and the EU Nature Restoration Regulation. The EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 instructs legal protection for at least 30% of marine areas in the EU and strict protection for 10%. The EU Nature Restoration Regulation determines the obligation of restoring at least 20% of marine areas by 2030 and restoring all ecosystems in need of rehabilitation by 2050.

An international agreement of special interest for marine environmental protection is the Barcelona Convention and its protocols, namely the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf, the Seabed and its Subsoil.

Objectives of the development and adoption of the Plan

The main objectives of the development and adoption of the Plan are generally determined by the Physical Planning Act and the MSP Directive, and they entail:

- in the process of developing the Plan, the objective is to determine spatial-planning solutions based on the evaluation of the current state, marine area special features and significant existing activities, purposes and uses of the marine area and their impact on the environment and on the safety of navigation, as well as natural resources, taking into consideration the interaction with the surrounding marine area and long-term changes caused by climate change in accordance with available data
- connecting the territory of the Republic of Croatia with European systems of physical planning; mutually aligned and complementary distribution of various human actions and activities in space in order to achieve a functional and harmonised community development, while protecting integral spatial values;

rational use and protection of natural resources, nature conservation, environmental protection and prevention from pollution risks; protection of cultural property and values; integrity of valuable ecosystems and seawater quality; appropriate transport system; national security and defence and protection from natural and other calamities

- the planning imperative is to contribute to the sustainable development of the maritime traffic sector, fisheries sector, aquaculture sector, economy sector, energy sector and the conservation, protection and improvement of the environmental status, including resilience to climate change impacts, and other objectives
- when establishing and implementing spatial planning of the Exclusive Economic Zone, it is necessary to consider economic, social and environmental aspects in order to support sustainable development by applying an approach based on ecosystems, the promotion of the coexistence of relevant activities and uses, and the conservation, protection and improvement of the environmental status.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The applied methodology is the result of the legal framework and strategic documents of the Republic of Croatia and the European Union, compliance with the obligations transposed from international agreements and conventions, long-term continuity in integral land and sea planning, and past experiences of other Member States and recommendations for MSP.

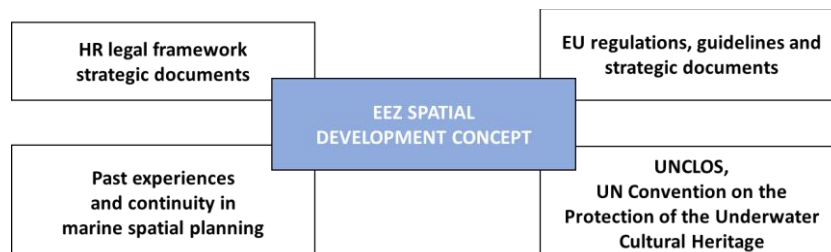


Image 3 – Fundamental elements of the methodological framework

Source: Institute for Spatial Development, Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets

When designating space for certain marine area use and delimitating other uses, the following requirements were taken into consideration:

- compliance with the Decision on development
- compliance with the regulatory framework, requests of public law bodies, natural conditions and resources availability
- compatibility/conflict of activities in marine area use:
 - avoiding conflicts
 - the possibility of multiple use
 - the possibility of synergy
- protection areas (resources, fragile ecosystems, underwater cultural heritage, etc.)
- minimising negative impacts on the marine environment (evaluated through the SEA procedure)
- the opportunity for scientific research and monitoring the marine environmental status.

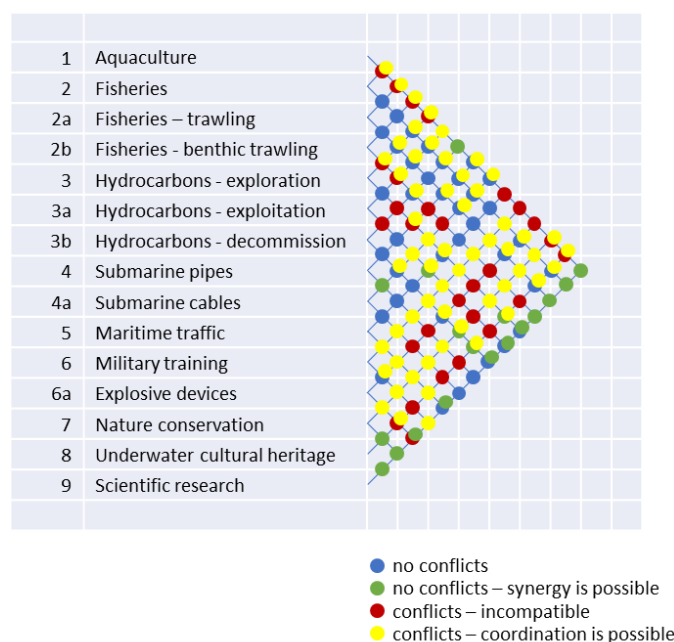


Table 1 – Compatibility table of different uses/activities

Source: Institute for Spatial Development, Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets

In order to meet the requirements and criteria, a compatibility analysis of marine area activities was conducted by topics from the MSP Directive which are the subject of the Decision on development. In the presented compatibility table, the conflicts/potential conflicts when numerous activities are in progress are taken into account across a range – from the narrow perspective of a location where only one activity is possible (e.g. a necessary operational area for aquaculture or hydrocarbon exploitation) to a wider perspective of a planning zone where activities can be distributed.

Stakeholders in Planning Process

Stakeholders are included in the development of the Plan in accordance with the provisions of the Physical Planning Act (by submitting a request, through consultation, by participating in a public debate on the proposal of the Plan, by giving opinions, etc.) and through a cross-sectoral expert group established to monitor the implementation of the MSP Directive. Experts from scientific institutions and the academic community are also included in order to provide expert support for certain areas of the development of the Proposal of the Plan.

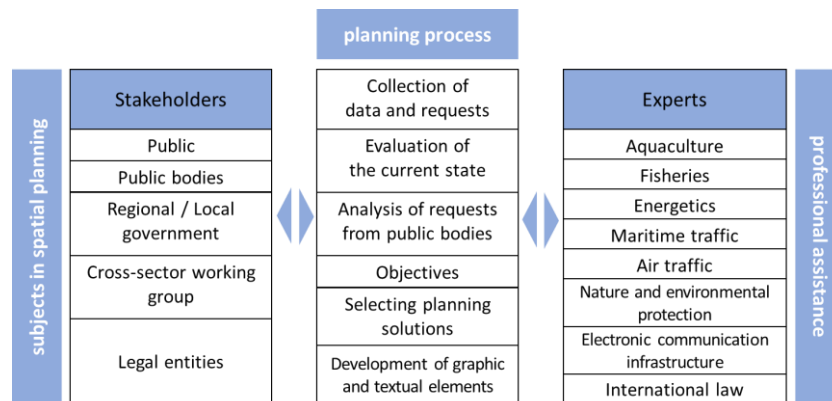


Image 4 – Overview of interactive participation of stakeholders and experts from different areas in the planning process

Source: Institute for Spatial Development, Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets

Plan Structure

The Plan entails:

- A. Textual part – Explanation of the Plan
 1. Starting points
 2. Objectives
 3. Explanation of planning solutions
- B. Textual part – Implementing provisions of the Plan
- C. Graphic part – Cartographic representations
 0. Boundaries
 - Thematic maps
 1. Aquaculture
 2. Fishing areas
 3. Exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons
 4. Submarine cables and pipelines
 5. Maritime traffic
 6. Special purpose
 - 7.1. Nature and species conservation and marine protected areas

- 7.2. Nature and species conservation and marine protected areas (habitats)
- 8. Underwater cultural heritage
- 9. Scientific research
 - Synthesis map
- 10. MSP Croatia

The planning solutions are suggested based on the determined starting points and objectives (chapters A.1. and A.2.), and they are explained in chapter A.3.

The use of the EEZ marine area is specified in thematic cartographic representations, which form an integral part of the graphic part of the Plan, while the implementation of the Plan is prescribed in the implementing provisions of the Plan.

The Proposal of the Plan, which includes textual parts A. Explanation and B. Implementing provisions as well as graphic part C. Cartographic representations, is available for public consultations on the Ministry's website via the following link:

<https://mpgi.gov.hr/prostorni-planovi-drzavne-razine/prostorni-planovi-podrucja-posebnih-obiljezja/prostorni-plan-iskljucivoga-gospodarskog-pojasa-republike-hrvatske-u-jadranskom-moru/prijedlog-plana-za-javnu-raspravu/18620>

The SEA Study of the Plan and its non-technical summary are available on the Ministry's website via the following link:

<https://mpgi.gov.hr/djelokrug-50/prostorni-planovi-podrucja-posebnih-obiljezja/prostorni-plan-iskljucivoga-gospodarskog-pojasa-republike-hrvatske-u-jadranskom-moru/27-06-2025-studija-utjecaja-na-okolis-za-ppigp/18638>

PLANNING SOLUTIONS

Aquaculture

Explanation of Planning Solutions

The Aquaculture Act is an umbrella act in Croatia which regulates the implementation of the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) in the part referring to aquaculture.

Within the existing regulatory framework, aquaculture activities currently take place in the territorial sea and internal sea water areas, while breeding site locations are included in the spatial-planning documentation at the regional and local level.

Considering the fact that the high seas breeding conditions require using more complex infrastructural and technological solutions, it will be necessary to adapt the regulatory framework by adopting new and/or revising valid regulations in order to develop the EEZ aquaculture activities.

The Plan, on the basis of the methodological framework, designated areas for potential development of the EEZ aquaculture, while, to determine specific breeding site locations, it will be necessary to conduct more detailed spatial analyses with respect to biophysical characteristics of the sea, predominant climate and oceanographic conditions, necessary maritime and land infrastructure and other instances concerning the questions whether the area is suitable for breeding certain species and what is the maximum breeding capacity.

When designating areas for potential development of open sea aquaculture, the following restrictions were taken into consideration: intensive maritime traffic, submarine cables and pipelines, areas which include platforms for hydrocarbon exploitation, ecological network areas, areas of special fisheries management regime – the Jabuka/Pomo Pit FRA, as well as special purpose areas.

By assessing the impact of the Plan on the goals of conservation and integrity of the ecological network area, it is determined that areas of potential aquaculture development are excluded from the ecological network area.

Implementing Provisions

The Plan designates areas for potential aquaculture development.

In the areas designated by this Plan for potential aquaculture development, it is permitted to implement projects intended for breeding marine organisms (aquaculture), including the construction of all necessary auxiliary objects and infrastructure in accordance with the technological process.

Aquaculture projects are implemented in accordance with valid regulations on breeding fish, shellfish and other marine organisms.

Aquaculture projects are subject to regulations in the field of nature and environmental protection.

Until specific aquaculture breeding site locations have been determined, the areas designated by this Plan as areas for potential aquaculture development can be used for other activities: maritime traffic, fisheries, laying cables and pipelines, scientific research and military exercises.

In the areas of breeding sites and at a distance of no more than 300 m from the marked position of the breeding site – or 50 m for shellfish breeding sites – or from the border of the concession area, fishing and all other activities which may disturb the breeding activity are prohibited.

Exceptionally, fishing activities in the areas of aquaculture breeding are permitted in cases determined by a special regulation.

In order to determine specific aquaculture breeding site locations, it is necessary to conduct more detailed spatial analyses of suitability and sensitivity with respect to biophysical characteristics of the sea, predominant climate and oceanographic conditions, necessary maritime and land infrastructure and other instances concerning the questions whether the area is suitable for breeding certain species and what is the maximum breeding capacity, whereby the following parameters are taken into account:

- distance from the shore
- necessary land infrastructure
- planned breeding method and organism type
- ecological conditions
- protection of habitats and species
- underwater cultural heritage
- bathymetry, winds, wave height, precipitation, vertical water temperature, current velocity, benthic topography, structure and composition of sediments, suspended solids, seawater quality, etc.

Within aquaculture breeding sites it is permitted to perform other complementary activities as well.

For the areas for potential aquaculture development, environmental protection measures and measures to mitigate negative impacts on the goals of conservation and integrity of the ecological network area are prescribed by the SEA Study of the Plan and mandatorily applied.

For the purpose of adapting to and mitigating climate change, breeding low-trophic species, which can contribute to carbon sequestration, is given priority.

For the purpose of adapting to and mitigating climate change, it is necessary to apply measures from relevant regulations aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption in all phases of aquaculture.

Fishing Areas

Explanation of Planning Solutions

The implementation of the CFP, i.e. of the European managerial framework in fisheries, which comprises the Regulation (EU) 1389/2013 and a series of regulations adopted on its basis, is ensured by the Marine Fisheries Act. This Act also determines the fishing sea of the Republic of Croatia, which encompasses internal sea waters, the territorial sea and the EEZ.

Measures on sustainable fisheries management include, inter alia, measures on fixing fishing opportunities, spatial and temporal regulations of fishing and technical measures, with one of the key mechanisms being the establishment of multiannual plans for managing a certain species or a certain fisheries segment.

In the entire fishing sea of the Republic of Croatia, a fishing regulation system is carried out, which includes measures stemming from the CFP and regional organisations for fisheries management (GFCM, ICCAT), while a managerial framework with additional measures including spatial and temporal regulations of fishing for certain fishing tools with the aim of protecting certain species, areas or ecosystems is continuously developed and applied at the national level.

In order to implement measures for marine biodiversity management and collecting necessary data, the fishing sea of the Republic of Croatia is divided into eleven fishing zones, with four of them being in the EEZ. In the fishing zones located in internal sea waters and the territorial sea, spatial and temporal restrictions for certain tools and restrictions referring to structural and technical characteristics of tools are imposed.

In the EEZ area there is the Jabuka/Pomo Pit Fisheries Restricted Area, where extremely strict management regime applies, while, in the rest of the EEZ, the same management measures apply as in the internal and territorial sea or, in some cases, less severe measures, but always in line with existing international framework.

In 2015, the Italian Republic and the Republic of Croatia bilaterally agreed upon and implemented a joint management regime in the Jabuka/Pomo Pit area, which eventually evolved and grew into the Fisheries Restricted Area (FRA), as recognised in 2017 by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) through a binding act – Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/3, and later specified as a permanent regime through Recommendation GFCM/44/2021/2 in 2021.

The majority of the Jabuka/Pomo Pit FRA area is located in the EEZ, where it encompasses:

- the central no-take zone where fishing using trawl gear, bottom longlines, lines, fish traps, single gillnets, sardine purse seine nets is prohibited, together with sports and recreational fishing
- a marginal part of the Jabuka/Pomo Pit (with fishing zone C – the so-called Jabučki Džep), where strict restrictions of fishing using benthic gear are in force.

At the international level, the Jabuka/Pomo Pit is recognised as an ecologically and biologically significant area (EBSA), determined within the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

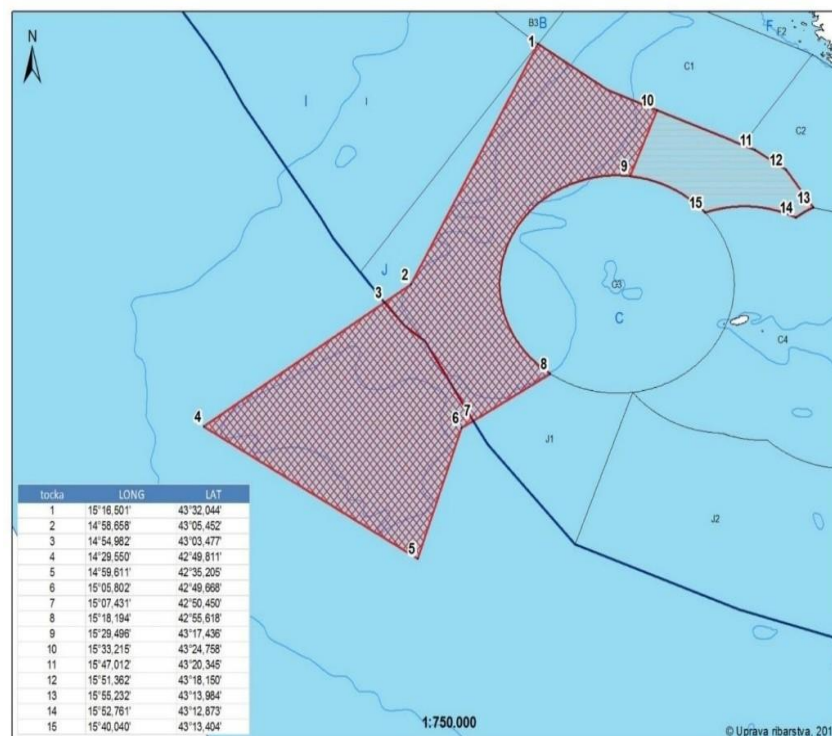


Image 5 – Jabuka/Pomo Pit FRA

Source: Ordinance on the special fisheries management regime in part of the Jabuka/Pomo Pit waters

The conservation of the fish stock is an important segment of future development of the fisheries sector and marine ecosystem protection as well. Priority areas in this respect are natural nurseries and hatcheries of the most important species in terms of economy. It is essential to protect particularly fragile areas important for the fish stock in order to ensure natural repopulation of certain species significant for the fisheries sector.

The Plan permits fishing activities within the entire EEZ area, except within the safety zones of platforms for hydrocarbon exploitation and the areas of aquaculture breeding sites, including the zone around aquaculture breeding sites.

In certain EEZ areas, fishing activities are permitted with restrictions. The restrictions for fishing activities refer to corridors for underwater cables and pipelines, areas of special fisheries management regime – FRA, sea areas deeper than 1000 m, and areas for the disposal of unexploded ordnance.

In accordance with measures from the SEA Study of the Plan, within the EEZ area it is necessary to:

- establish the zones where all types of natural resource exploitation are prohibited (no-take zones) with the aim of ensuring sufficient food in order to conserve target species of the ecological network area
- reduce the pressure of fisheries in the ecological network area based on scientific data.

Implementing Provisions

Fishing activities are permitted within the entire EEZ area, except within:

- the safety zone of the platform for hydrocarbon exploitation and at a distance of no more than 500 m, measured from every point of the outer limit of the offshore installation
- the areas of aquaculture breeding sites and at a distance of no more than 300 m from the marked position of the breeding site – or 50 m for shellfish breeding sites – or from the border of the concession area.

In certain areas designated by this Plan for other activities, fishing is permitted with restrictions and valid regulations.

Fishing activities within the FRAs are performed in accordance with a special regulation.

Benthic trawling is not permitted in the following areas:

- 500 m on each side of corridors for cables and pipelines
- in areas for the disposal of unexploded ordnance
- in areas involving registered underwater archaeological sites and archaeological sites significant for cultural heritage protection
- in areas where the sea is deeper than 1000 m.

For fishing areas, environmental protection measures and measures to mitigate negative impacts on the goals of conservation and integrity of the ecological network area are prescribed by the SEA Study of the Plan and mandatorily applied.

For the purpose of adapting to and mitigating climate change, it is necessary to apply measures from relevant regulations aimed at achieving sustainable fishery resources management, conservation of marine habitats which sequester carbon naturally, transition to more energy efficient fishing practices, etc.

Exploration and Exploitation of Hydrocarbons

Explanation of Planning Solutions

The activities of exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons are defined by the Act on the Exploration and Exploitation of Hydrocarbons and the Energy Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia until 2030, with an outlook to 2050.

Oil and mining operations related to hydrocarbon exploration can be conducted only on the basis of an issued permit for exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons and a concluded contract on exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons. Oil and mining operations related to hydrocarbon exploitation can be conducted only on the basis of a contract on exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons and a hydrocarbon extraction permit or on the basis of the existing right to exploit hydrocarbons. To conduct oil and mining operations and

to construct oil and mining installations and plants, oil and mining projects are developed in accordance with special regulations.

The existing hydrocarbon exploitation fields (hereinafter referred to as: EPU) in the EEZ include: EPU “Izabela”, EPU “Sjeverni Jadran” and EPU “Marica”, which include 19 offshore installations with the corresponding oil and mining installations and plants comprising the existing gathering and transport system in the Adriatic.

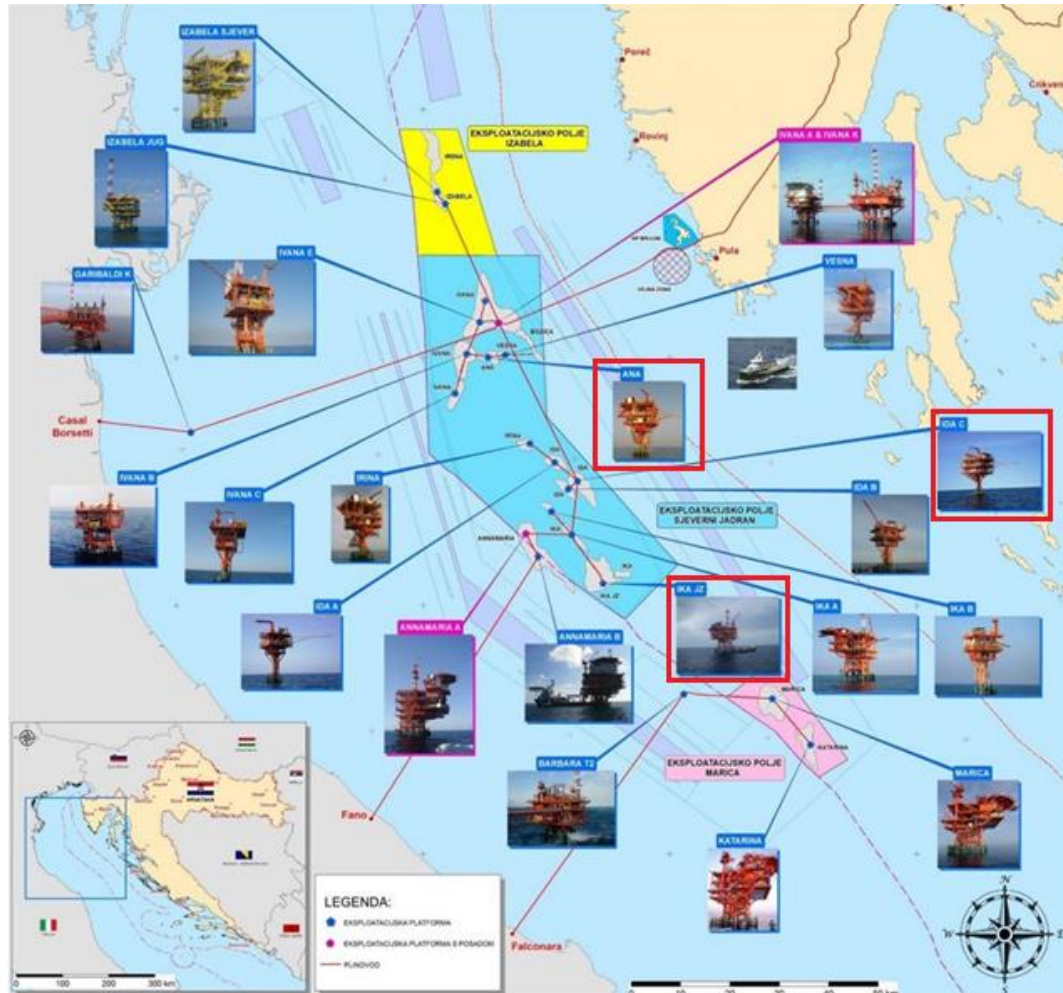


Image 6 – Overview of hydrocarbon exploitation fields and oil and mining installations

Source: Environmental protection study for the assessment of the need for an environmental impact assessment for the project “Construction and Commissioning of Appraisal Wells Exploitation at Hydrocarbon Exploitation Field ‘Sjeverni Jadran’, Gas Fields Ana, Ika JZ and Ida”, Faculty of Mining, Geology and Petroleum Engineering, December, 2024

The Plan does not permit activities of exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons outside the existing, approved EPUs.

All existing, approved EPUs entail the possibility of constructing new appraisal wells, constructing new or reconstructing existing oil and mining installations and plants for the purpose of hydrocarbon development and exploitation.

Implementing Provisions

By the Decision on development, the activities of exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons are included in the EEZ activities framework.

Exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons is not permitted outside the existing, approved hydrocarbon exploitation fields (EPU “Izabela”, EPU “Sjeverni Jadran”, EPU “Marica”).

Within the existing, approved hydrocarbon exploitation fields it is permitted to:

- construct, reconstruct, maintain and remove oil and mining installations and plants, including submarine pipelines that are technologically linked to determined exploitation fields and to corresponding pipelines outside these areas
- develop new appraisal wells, construct new or reconstruct existing oil and mining installations and plants for hydrocarbon development and exploitation, and to connect the installations and plants via submarine pipelines
- remove exploitation platforms and pipelines.

Within the existing, approved hydrocarbon exploitation fields, the following restrictions apply:

- it is forbidden to construct oil and mining installations in places where they could disrupt the use of recognised international waterways
- a safety zone is defined around the platform according to regulations on important technical requirements, safety and protection when exploring and exploiting hydrocarbons in the submarine area of the Republic of Croatia and other maritime regulations
- in the safety zone around the platform at a distance of no more than 500 m, measured from every point of the outer limit of the offshore installation, unauthorised aircrafts, helicopters or watercrafts are not permitted to enter and remain in the zone except for performing primary activities, and anchoring watercrafts, aquaculture, fisheries, laying cables and pipelines and other activities that could jeopardize the performance of primary activities are also not permitted, except in cases determined by a special regulation
- permanent abandonment of a well, completion of exploration and/or exploitation and removal of oil and mining installations and plants must be carried out according to technical solutions from the oil and mining project and in accordance with valid regulations. Prior to final abandonment of a well, the casing must be cut below or at the seabed level
- in areas which are economically significant for fisheries, it is necessary to coordinate the period of performing planned activities with the ministry competent for fisheries, since the noise caused by seismic surveys, platform installation, drilling operations, pipeline installation and platform removal may have an effect on fisheries
- prior to commencing the works, it is necessary to survey the seabed intended for platform installation and, in the event of finding unexploded ordnance, notify the competent services to safely remove the ordnance from the seabed.

For pipelines and cables laid for the purpose of hydrocarbon exploitation (connecting pipelines and cables – from the well to the platform and between platforms, and export pipelines and cables – from the platform to the land), the following restrictions are prescribed:

- protective corridor for submarine cables and pipelines extends 500 m on each side from the pipeline axis
- after the pipelines have been used, i.e. the exploitation has stopped, it is necessary to completely remove the transported fluid and fill the pipelines with seawater, i.e. render them inert
- in order to protect the submarine cables and pipelines, the positions of laid submarine cables and pipelines must be adequately marked in accordance with a special regulation.

For all construction works/installations whose planned height exceeds 60 m above the sea level, it is necessary to obtain consent in accordance with a special regulation.

For areas of existing, approved hydrocarbon exploitation fields, environmental protection measures and measures to mitigate negative impacts on the goals of conservation and integrity of the ecological network area are prescribed by the SEA Study of the Plan and mandatorily applied.

For the purpose of adapting to and mitigating climate change, alongside adhering to other regulations, it is forbidden to discharge liquid hydrocarbons and toxins into the sea during hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation works.

Submarine Cables and Pipelines

Explanation of Planning Solutions

The UNCLOS Convention defines the freedom of other states within the EEZ area to lay submarine cables and pipelines in compliance with the relevant laws and regulations of the Republic of Croatia.

The EEZ area currently entails:

- two submarine electronic communication cables on routes: Umag-Mestre (Italy) and Dubrovnik-Albania (not in operation)
- submarine energy cable Italy-Montenegro
- pipelines within hydrocarbon exploitation fields and pipelines between hydrocarbon exploitation fields and land (of Croatia and Italy) – addressed in the chapter addressing the exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons.

In order to lay and maintain existing submarine cables, technical standards and safety guidelines in accordance with the regulations of the International Telecommunication Union and the International Maritime Organization apply. At the national level, the provisions on submarine cables and pipelines are prescribed by the Maritime Code and by a special regulation on the conditions to issue an approval to lay submarine cables and pipelines.

The ministry competent for the sea, traffic and infrastructure approves and monitors the laying and maintenance of submarine cables and pipelines in the EEZ which cross into the territorial sea area, while the Republic of Croatia grants consent regarding the direction of laying submarine pipelines which are laid in the EEZ but do not cross into the territorial sea area.

Laying submarine cables and pipelines requires an environmental impact assessment, especially in ecologically fragile areas, which is prescribed by special regulations in the field of environment and nature protection.

The Plan determines corridors for existing cables and pipelines, which should be complied with in order to ensure their protection and safe conduct of other activities.

Furthermore, once the communication cables have been laid, it is necessary to define the ways (measures) of protecting the essential infrastructure from cybernetic threats in accordance with national and EU regulations, which minimises the risk of communication breaks and ensures continuous protection of vital national interests.

The conditions for laying planned cables and pipelines are given in accordance with recommendations from the methodological framework, taking into account cross-impacts with other activities (e.g. fishing using benthic trawl nets, aquaculture, maritime traffic) and possible impact on the marine environment, namely in protected areas or especially fragile habitats.

Testing, drilling or anchoring operations, using benthic trawl nets and disposing of unexploded ordnance in the corridors for submarine cables and pipelines is not permitted.

Existing submarine cables (communications, energy) and pipelines can be maintained, replaced and reconstructed in accordance with special regulations. Submarine cables which are abandoned or no longer used

in the EEZ must be removed taking into account marine environmental protection, the safety of navigation, international law and other maritime activities. Once the pipelines have been used (the exploitation has stopped), it is necessary to completely remove the transported fluid and fill the pipelines with seawater (render them inert) and remove them from the seabed. If the removal could cause significant ecological consequences, alternative solutions can be considered, such as stabilising and marking the infrastructure in nautical charts.

Implementing Provisions

The Plan determines corridors for submarine cables and pipelines, 500 m on each side of the axis, which should be complied with in order to ensure their protection and safe conduct of other activities.

In the corridors for submarine cables and pipelines, it is not permitted to perform the activities of testing, drilling or anchoring, aquaculture, benthic trawling and disposing of unexploded ordnance.

Laying submarine cables and pipelines is permitted within the entire EEZ area, taking into account other activities and in accordance with valid regulations.

Submarine cables and pipelines must not be laid in such a way to disrupt navigation.

In the areas designated by this Plan as maritime traffic priority areas, laying cables and pipelines in the direction of traffic flows should be avoided.

Submarine cables and pipelines must not be laid in places involving existing aquaculture breeding sites, exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons, except those laid for the purpose of exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons, underwater cultural heritage and in the zone of 100 m from the target habitat type 1170 Reefs of the ecological network area HR3000477 Reefs in the Jabuka/Pomo Pit.

In the event of laying submarine cables and pipelines within the area of disposing of unexploded ordnance, prior to commencing the works it is necessary to survey the seabed and, in the event of finding unexploded ordnance, notify the competent services to safely remove the ordnance from the seabed.

When laying submarine cables and pipelines, environmental protection measures and measures to mitigate negative impacts on the goals of conservation and integrity of the ecological network area are prescribed by the SEA Study of the Plan and mandatorily applied.

Activities related to laying submarine cables and pipelines also entail conducting necessary exploratory works beforehand.

Prior to conducting geotechnical and other research that precede infrastructural works, and prior to the infrastructural works as well, it is necessary to carry out relevant procedures prescribed by special regulations in the field of nature and environmental protection.

Existing submarine cables and pipelines can be maintained, replaced and reconstructed in accordance with special regulations taking into account other activities and the protection of nature and the marine environment, habitats and species, and the rights and obligations of other states if it does not pose a threat to the environmental status.

Submarine cables and pipelines that are abandoned or no longer used must be removed taking into account other activities and marine environmental protection, as well as rights and obligations of other states if it does not pose a threat to the environmental status.

If the removal could cause significant ecological consequences, alternative solutions can be considered, such as stabilising and marking the infrastructure in nautical charts, all for the purpose of maintaining ecological balance, the safety of maritime traffic and the protection of rights of all stakeholders using the maritime space.

The procedures for handling pipelines used for exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons are prescribed by relevant implementing provisions in the chapter addressing the exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons.

Maritime and Air Traffic

The UNCLOS Convention defines the freedom of navigation and overflight of other states within the EEZ area.

Maritime Traffic

Explanation of Planning Solutions

Spatial planning in the EEZ area in the part referring to maritime transport routes and traffic flows entails consistent application of principles and measures aimed at determining the purpose of the space and ensuring:

- safety of navigation
- protection of the marine environment from operational pollution and pollution caused by shipping incidents
- economic efficiency through connecting ports open to public traffic and ports of special purpose.

Safety of navigation and marine environmental protection

The safety of maritime navigation and the protection of the sea from pollution is regulated by international conventions and national regulations. At the national level, the issue of the safety of navigation and the protection of the marine environment from pollution is regulated by the Maritime Code.

Preventing marine pollution in the part referring to ship navigation in the EEZ is regulated by the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL 1973/78), and releasing ballast water in the Adriatic Sea is primarily regulated by the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (BWM Convention).

In case of danger in the EEZ area, but also in the territorial sea and internal sea waters of the Republic of Croatia, the procedure for preventing marine pollution is determined by the provisions of the Maritime Code which refer to the safety of navigation and by a special regulation on places of refuge.

The monitoring of ship navigation is performed by the employees of VTS (Vessel Traffic System) centres affiliated with Rijeka, Split and Dubrovnik port authorities.

Routing and traffic separation systems

In accordance with the fundamental principles referring to maritime transport routes and traffic flows, a series of measures was suggested and accepted with the aim of improving the safety of navigation and marine environmental protection of the Adriatic Sea.

In the northern Adriatic area, at the proposal of Albania, Croatia, Slovenia, Italy, Serbia and Montenegro, in 2003 a routing system was adopted, including a traffic separation system. The system was modified in 2006 due to planned construction of an offshore LNG terminal (Adria LNG).

Besides the routing system measures in the northern Adriatic, there is also a routing system in the Palagruža island area.

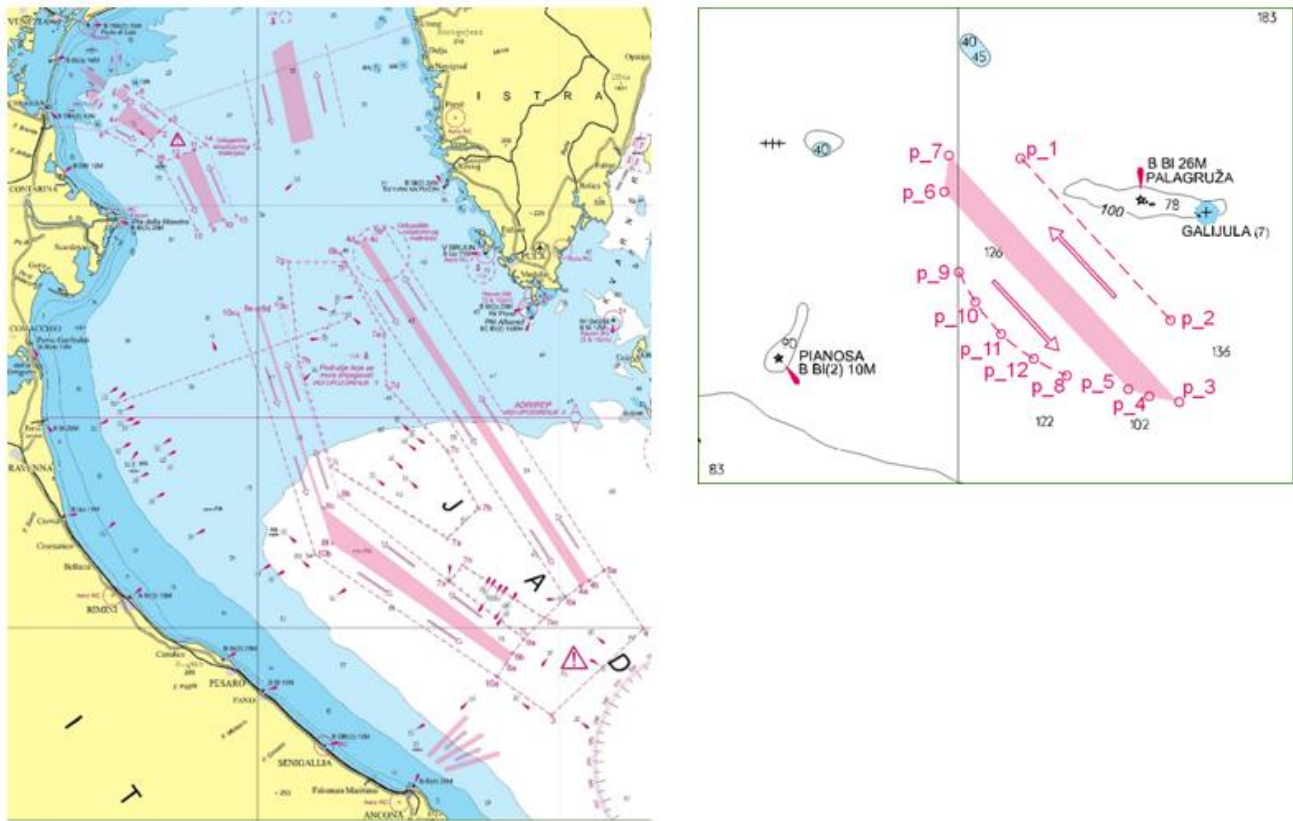


Image 7. – Routing and traffic separation systems

Source: Hydrographic Institute of the Republic of Croatia (HHI)

Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T)

The EU Trans-European Transport Network is a key instrument for planning and developing a coherent, efficient, multimodal and high-quality transport infrastructure across the EU.

The ports of Rijeka, Split and Ploče are included in the network as core ports, while 11 ports are included as comprehensive ports (Cres, Dubrovnik, Hvar, Korčula, Preko, Pula, Rab, Rogač, Šibenik, Stari Grad and Supetar). The ports which experience the highest volume of international traffic, namely Rijeka and Ploče, followed by both Split and Dubrovnik, have the largest network impact.

Characteristics of traffic in the Adriatic Sea

Maritime traffic in the Adriatic Sea is characterised by three different types of traffic differing in technical properties of ships, common waterways and traffic frequency: international traffic, regional traffic and local traffic.

International traffic involves traffic from distant ports, predominantly container transport and liquid cargo and gas transport, and to a lesser extent, traffic of passenger ships intended for cruises. The ships primarily arrive to large ports in the northern Adriatic (Rijeka, Koper, Trieste, Venice).

Regional traffic involves traffic between the ports of the Adriatic Sea and the Ionian Sea, and it is predominantly sustained by ro-ro passenger ships. The main ports are Split, Ancona, Bari and, to a much lesser extent, Venice, Trieste, Dubrovnik, Zadar, Bar and Durrës.

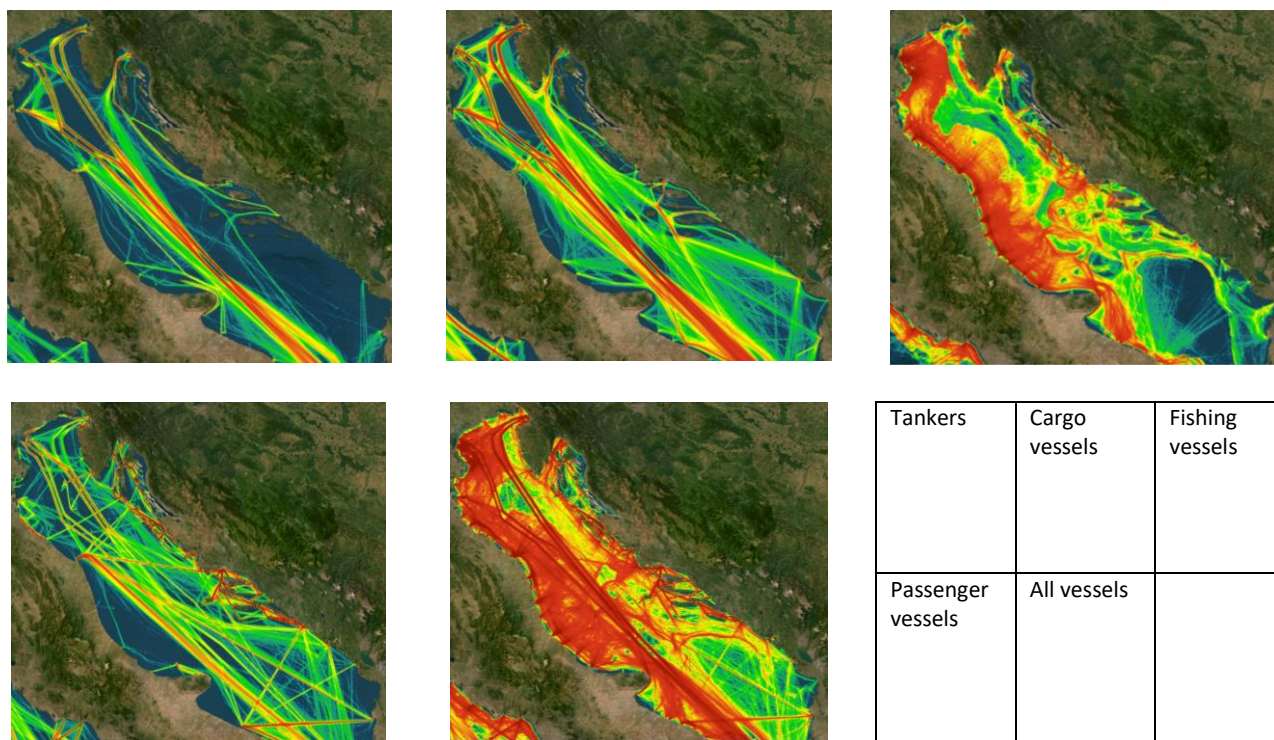


Image 8. – Routes – density – per year 2019-2023

Source: EMODnet

In the EEZ area, navigation without restrictions is generally permitted in accordance with international rules for preventing collisions at sea. Exceptionally, in traffic separation areas all vessels are obliged to follow the routing zones.

The navigation restrictions can be introduced due to the safety of navigation, marine environmental protection measures or other planning activities. Short-term navigation restrictions are established in the event of performing scientific and research measurements and activities, military exercises and similar activities. Long-term navigation restrictions are established in the event of positioning floating or fixed installations for submarine exploitation, positioning installations intended for aquaculture, establishing areas for nature conservation and cultural property protection and other similar activities.

Long-term navigation restrictions are generally not established for the routing systems and for the areas of navigation with increased caution. In the event of establishing long-term navigation restrictions, a safety zone of 500 m, measured from every point of the area, is also established.

Preventing marine pollution in the part referring to ship navigation in the EEZ is regulated by the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL 1973/78).

The results of the SEA Study of the Plan show that the impact of maritime traffic on the environment is negligible, with strict adherence to the rules prescribed by MARPOL when performing the activities.

Implementing Provisions

In the EEZ area, navigation without restrictions is generally permitted in accordance with international rules for preventing collisions at sea.

Exceptionally, in traffic separation areas all vessels are obliged to follow the routing zones.

The Plan designates maritime traffic priority areas involving routing and traffic separation zones and traffic flow corridors with the highest traffic density.

In the maritime traffic priority areas, it is not permitted to establish aquaculture breeding sites.

Navigation restrictions within the EEZ can be imposed due to:

- measures for the safety of navigation
- measures for marine environmental protection
- other planning activities.

Short-term restrictions are mandatorily declared in the event of:

- conducting scientific and research measurements and works
- navigation, i.e. towing vessels that cannot efficiently apply the rules for preventing collisions at sea for any reason
- military and other exercises
- other activities that require navigation restrictions for other vessels.

Long-term navigation restrictions are imposed for the purpose of protecting the environment from adverse effects of maritime traffic and they apply in the event of:

- positioning offshore floating or fixed installations for submarine exploitation
- positioning installations intended for aquaculture
- establishing areas of nature and species conservation
- establishing areas of cultural heritage protection
- other justified reasons.

For the purpose of adapting to and mitigating climate change, it is mandatory to apply the rules prescribed by international regulations governing the prevention of pollution from ships and other relevant regulations aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the combustion of fossil fuels in ship engines.

Air Traffic

Explanation of Planning Solutions

The air traffic system in the Republic of Croatia involves civil and military users of airspace, service providers in air navigation, the corresponding airport infrastructure and navigation and other systems. The system is aligned with international standards prescribed by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA).

The Croatian Air Force is a branch of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia responsible for air defence, airspace surveillance, transport, combat operations and other military duties. As a user of the EEZ airspace, the Croatian Air Force can reserve and limit the use of specific airspace volume within the framework of NATO activities with neighbouring and other countries.

The EEZ is located within the Zagreb flight information region (Zagreb FIR) and Milano and Brindisi flight information regions (Milano FIR/Brindisi FIR).

In the EEZ area, airspace volumes with vertical and horizontal limits are defined: controlled airspace, airspace where flying is specifically regulated and uncontrolled airspace.

Implementing Provisions

For all construction works/installations whose planned height exceeds 60 m above the sea level, it is necessary to obtain consent in accordance with the provisions of a special regulation.

Special Purpose

Explanation of Planning Solutions

The special purpose areas are related to military and defence activities. Within the EEZ there are no determined maritime military training grounds, but there are certain important airspace structures of variable nature. In practice, all exercises carried out in the Adriatic Sea, with the Republic of Croatia as a participant, are coordinated and announced.

UNCLOS does not explicitly mention performance of any military activities in the exclusive economic zone, nor it restricts them in any sense. The Republic of Croatia can intervene if the performance of such activities includes prejudice to its rights in the EEZ.

Structures in airspace where flying is specifically regulated (restricted areas) may be established in the EEZ. If these airspace structures directly correlate with the Plan, it is necessary to take into consideration the requirements of Croatia Control (HKZP) and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia when planning the activities.

Certain restricted areas can be permanently active and published in the Aeronautical Information Publication, while others can be activated upon request.

During military exercises, other activities are restricted (e.g. restrictions for navigation and the use of segregated airspace).

Based on the available sources, areas for the disposal of unexploded ordnance are marked within the EEZ area and restrictions and prohibitions of performing certain activities in these areas are prescribed. It is necessary to conduct further research in order to register the areas and propose the manner of marking and rehabilitating them, as well as to eliminate danger while activities are in progress in these areas.

For all construction works/installations whose planned height exceeds 60 m above the sea level, it is necessary to obtain consent in accordance with the provisions of a special regulation.

Implementing Provisions

It is possible to use the entire EEZ area for mixed purposes, taking into account other activities and in accordance with valid regulations.

Information on military exercises is publicly announced in the manner stipulated by special regulations.

During military exercises, temporal and spatial restrictions apply to other activities.

Nature and Species Conservation and Marine Protected Areas

Explanation of Planning Solutions

In the Republic of Croatia, the areas of nature and environmental protection, as well as the scopes of protection, are determined according to the laws and regulations pertaining to national legislation in the field of nature and environmental protection (the Environmental Protection Act and the Nature Protection Act) with adherence to the obligations arising from European regulations and internationally transposed obligations. The adoption of special regulations for nature conservation, and the proclamation of marine protected areas as well, is under the jurisdiction of the ministry competent for nature and environmental protection.

The categories of marine protected areas in the Republic of Croatia include national parks (Kornati and Mljet) and nature parks (Telašćica and the Lastovo Archipelago), special reserves, significant landscapes and sites of

community importance within the framework of the Natura 2000 ecological network, such as marine habitats important for the conservation of biodiversity whether in the field of conservation areas important for birds (SPA) or conservation areas important for species and habitat types (SCI).

Protected areas are managed by public institutions which perform the duties of protecting and maintaining the protected area, supervise the implementation of nature protection requirements and measures in the area they manage and participate in gathering data for the purpose of monitoring the state of nature conservation. In the EEZ area, this role is assumed by the ministry competent for nature and environmental protection.

The project “Mapping of coastal and seabed habitats in the area of the Adriatic Sea under the national jurisdiction” enabled the development of a map covering 51% of the surface area of coastal and seabed habitats in the Croatian territorial sea and the EEZ, which is a valuable contribution to identifying potentially important areas for conservation of biological resources, habitat types and communities in parts of the northern and central Adriatic.

The following ecological network areas are located within the EEZ area:

- SPA HR1000041 Northern Adriatic
Protection aimed at conserving the yelkouan shearwater (*Puffinus yelkouan*) target species
IBA criteria A1 and C1 for the yelkouan shearwater (*Puffinus yelkouan*) species
Research result of the LIFE Artina project
- SCI HR3000477 Reefs in the Jabuka/Pomo Pit
Protection aimed at conserving the Reefs 1170 target habitat type
- pSCI HR3000511 Northern Adriatic 1
Protection aimed at conserving the loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*) target species – area recognised as an important summer habitat of the species
Protection aimed at conserving the common bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) target species
- pSCI HR3000512 Northern Adriatic 2
Protection aimed at conserving the loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*) target species – area recognised as an important winter habitat of the species
Protection aimed at conserving the common bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) target species
- pSCI HR3000513 Jabuka/Pomo Pit
Protection aimed at conserving the loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*) target species
Protection aimed at conserving the common bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) target species
- pSCI HR3000514 Southern Adriatic
Protection aimed at conserving the common bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) target species

Strict protection of the areas, aimed to be achieved by 2030 for 10% of the marine area of the Republic of Croatia, can be achieved by management zoning of the area.

The planning solutions take into consideration existing and proposed conservation areas important for birds (SPA) and conservation areas important for species and habitat types (SCI) which form part of the European Natura 2000 ecological network.

While forming the planning solutions, the FRAs, protected through the fisheries sector, is also taken into consideration due to the positive impact on the protection and conservation of nature and species.

Future uses must not cause a significant negative impact with respect to the distribution of target species and habitat types within the ecological network area, or with respect to species and habitat types in general, or by permanent habitat occupation, changes in habitat conditions, reduction in the number and distribution or the disappearance of target species and habitat types, habitat fragmentation, decline in target species and other species in general, or by degrading the favourable state of the goals of conservation and integrity of a certain ecological network area.

The main assessment of acceptability for the ecological network, within the framework of the SEA Study of the Plan, prescribes mitigation measures in order to avoid potential significant negative individual or cumulative impacts on the ecological network, and their implementation into the Plan can eliminate significant negative impacts on the goals of conservation and integrity of the ecological network area.

The measures to mitigate negative impacts of planned activities on the goals of conservation and integrity of the ecological network area from the SEA Study of the Plan are transposed into the implementing provisions of the Plan for every activity individually.

Implementing Provisions

The activities within the EEZ area must not cause a significant negative impact with respect to the distribution of target species and habitat types within the ecological network area, or with respect to species and habitat types in general, or by permanent habitat occupation, changes in habitat conditions, reduction in the number and distribution or the disappearance of target species and habitat types, habitat fragmentation, decline in target species and other species in general, or by degrading the favourable status of the goals of conservation and integration of a certain ecological network area.

All activities should be performed in such a way to contribute to sustainable development, i.e. to achieve good marine environmental status.

All activities should contribute to sustainable development and must not cause additional significant pressures to biodiversity, considering the distribution of species and habitat types, as well as the areas important for their survival.

The main assessment of acceptability for the ecological network, within the framework of the SEA Study of the Plan, prescribes mitigation measures in order to avoid potential significant negative individual or cumulative impacts on the ecological network, and their implementation into the Plan can eliminate significant negative impacts on the goals of conservation and integrity of the ecological network area.

Underwater Cultural Heritage

Explanation of Planning Solutions

The Republic of Croatia is a signatory to the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage, adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in 2001 and applied in the context and manner aligned with international law, including UNCLOS.

Underwater activities in marine areas which include cultural heritage are conducted in accordance with a special regulation in the field of cultural property protection. The registered cultural property within the protection system is represented in the Geoportal of the Cultural Property of the Republic of Croatia. There are no data on existing/registered underwater cultural heritage within the EEZ area.

The procedure in the event of finding underwater archaeological heritage and the procedure of its protection is determined by regulations in the field of cultural heritage protection and conservation, taking into account relevant provisions of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage and of the Maritime Code.

Implementing Provisions

In the event of finding underwater cultural heritage, as well as in the event of conducting underwater archaeological research, the law and regulations in the field of cultural heritage protection and conservation

apply, taking into consideration relevant provisions of international regulations governing the cultural heritage protection and regulations governing legal relationships in marine and submarine areas of the Republic of Croatia.

Scientific Research

Explanation of Planning Solutions

Within the EEZ, the following marine area research is in progress:

- bio-ecological monitoring
 based on the Marine Strategy Framework Directive
 based on the Water Framework Directive
- fisheries monitoring
- geological research.

The research is related to projects such as MEDITS, MEDIAS, FAO AdriaMed, SoleMon, etc.

Based on the research conducted, measures for future management and protection are considered.

The Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries in Split actively participates in the implementation of programmes of state significance, such as international fisheries and biological research, including the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and the Water Framework Directive. The Institute, as the body competent for performing the activities of the Marine Reference Centre, participated in the implementation of obligations under MSFD. The Croatian Geological Survey conducts several geological research (scientific) projects in the Adriatic Sea area which represent pilot projects for the development of a Geological Map of the Adriatic under national jurisdiction at a scale of 1:250,000.

EU Directives oblige the Republic of Croatia to align with the standards of marine environmental conservation and sustainable marine resources management through monitoring key indicators of ecological status and marine biological diversity status. A good environmental status is determined by systematic monitoring and observation of 11 quality descriptors, which reflect the marine environmental status and the pressures which jeopardize it.

In the EEZ, it is necessary to increase research activities to gain a more comprehensive insight into the environmental status. The existing EEZ stations mostly conduct measurements of eutrophication (D5), biological diversity (D1), permanent alterations of hydrographical conditions (D7) and concentrations of contaminants (D8). Although these measurements offer a certain insight, a wider research scope is needed to adequately monitor all relevant ecological parameters.

The Plan enables conducting scientific research in the entire EEZ area and in accordance with special regulations and implementing provisions of the Plan.

Implementing Provisions

Scientific research can be conducted in the entire EEZ area in accordance with special regulations.

Research activities must not disrupt maritime traffic or the activities of hydrocarbon exploitation and aquaculture activities.

Submarine research (of the seabed and its subsoil) must be conducted with caution in the corridors for cables and pipelines and in the areas of the disposal of unexploded ordnance.

During scientific research, short-term restrictions for other activities apply.

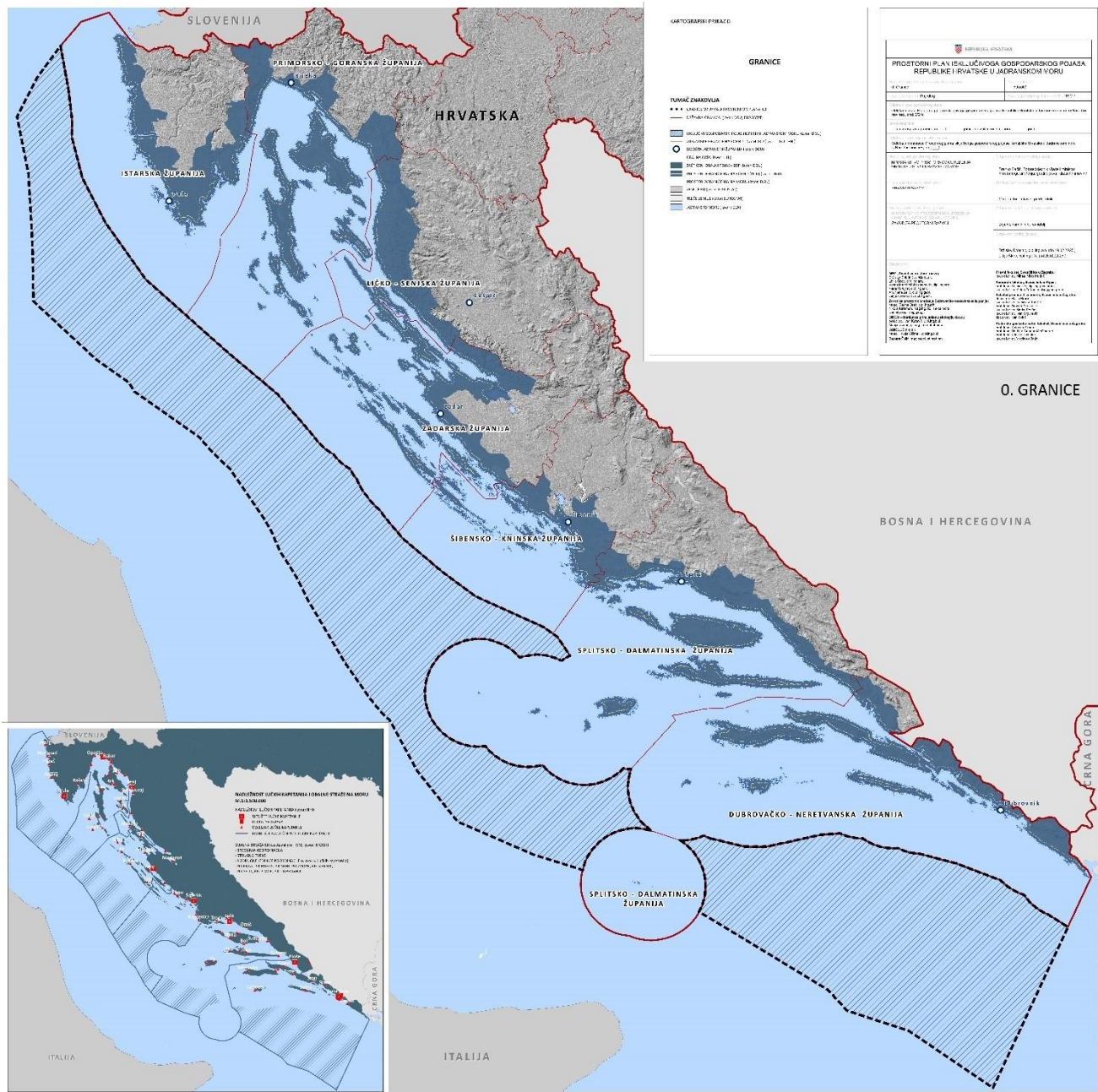
In the areas where other activities are performed, subject to restrictions or prohibitions, additional conditions to conduct scientific research are determined as needed and for the purpose of:

- ensuring safety and efficiency of maritime traffic
- avoiding damage on oil and mining installations and plants for exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons
- avoiding the disruption of military exercises and manoeuvres
- assessing and protecting cultural property with bodies competent for cultural property protection.

GRAPHICS

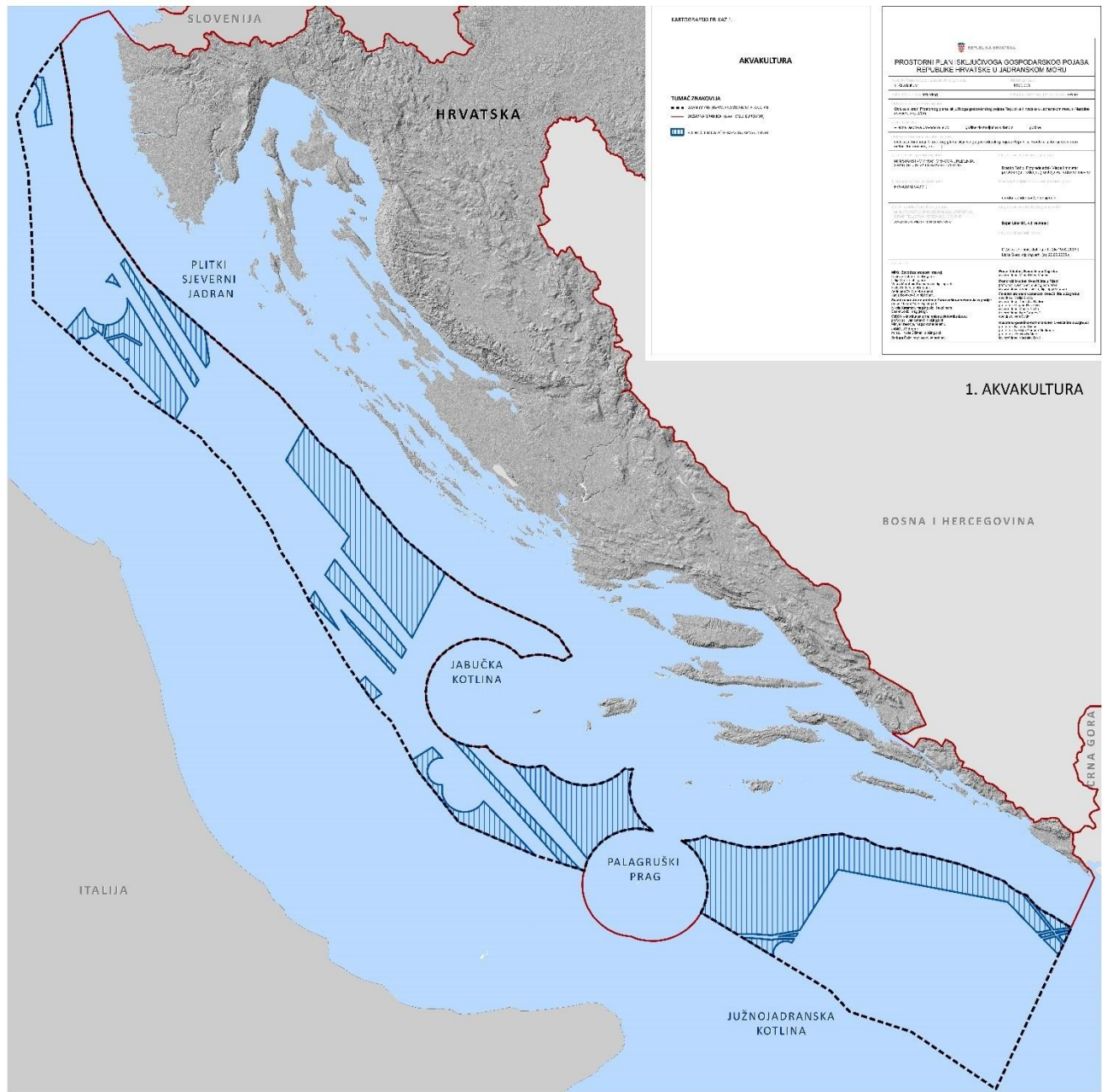
0. Boundaries
1. Aquaculture
2. Fishing Areas
3. Exploration and Exploitation of Hydrocarbons
4. Submarine Cables and Pipelines
5. Maritime Traffic
6. Special Purpose
7. Nature and Species Conservation and Marine Protected Areas
8. Underwater Cultural Heritage
9. Scientific Research
10. MSP Croatia (Synthesis Map)

0. Boundaries



- LEGEND**
- PLAN SCOPE
 - STATE BORDER
 - EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE (EEZ) OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA IN THE ADRIATIC SEA
 - COUNTY BOUNDARIES
 - COASTAL COUNTY SEATS
 - COASTAL LINE
 - PROTECTED COASTAL AREA – PCA
 - RESTRICTED LAND AREA
 - RESTRICTED SEA AREA
 - MEMBER STATES
 - THIRD COUNTRIES
 - ADRIATIC SEA

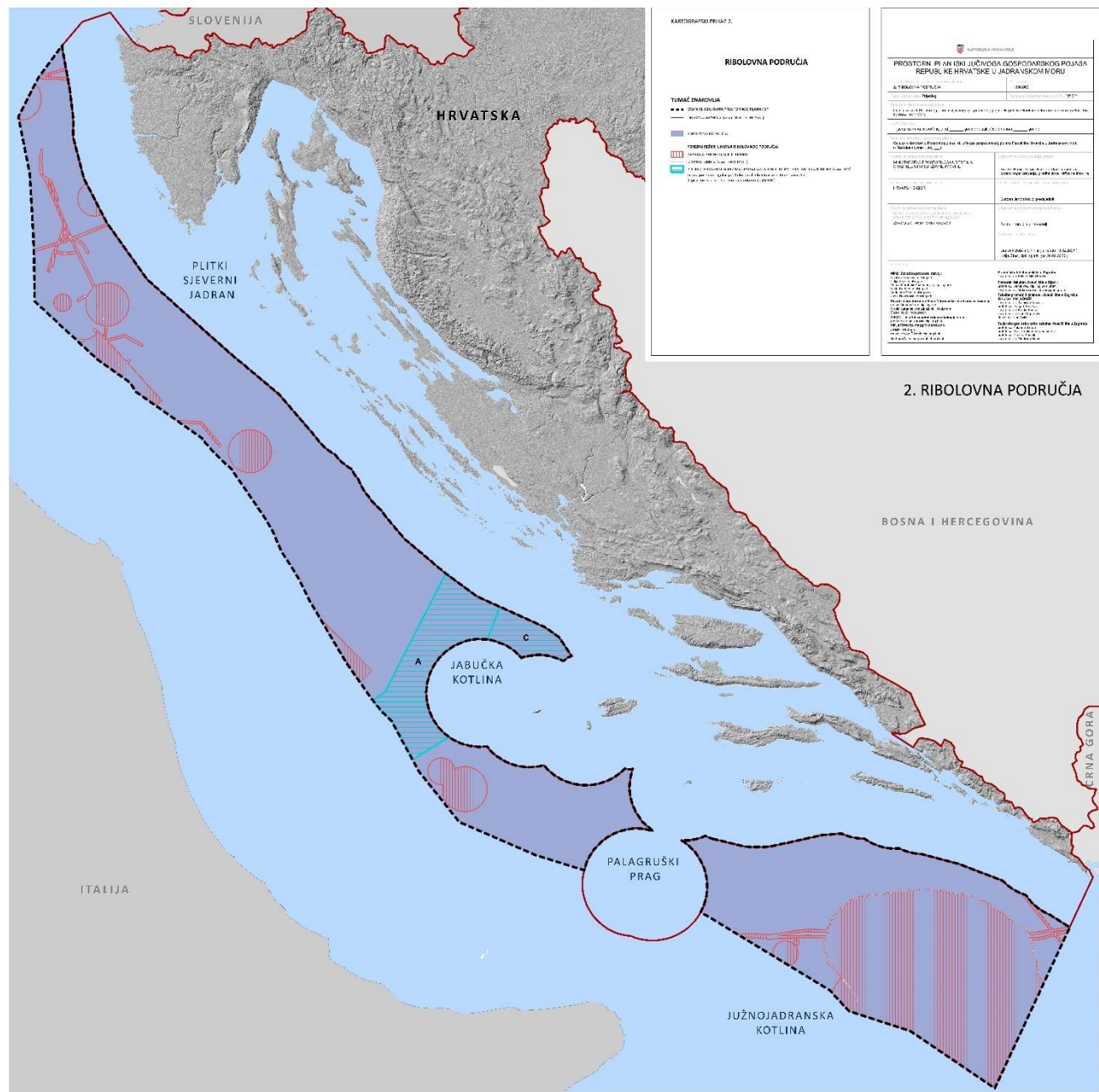
1. Aquaculture



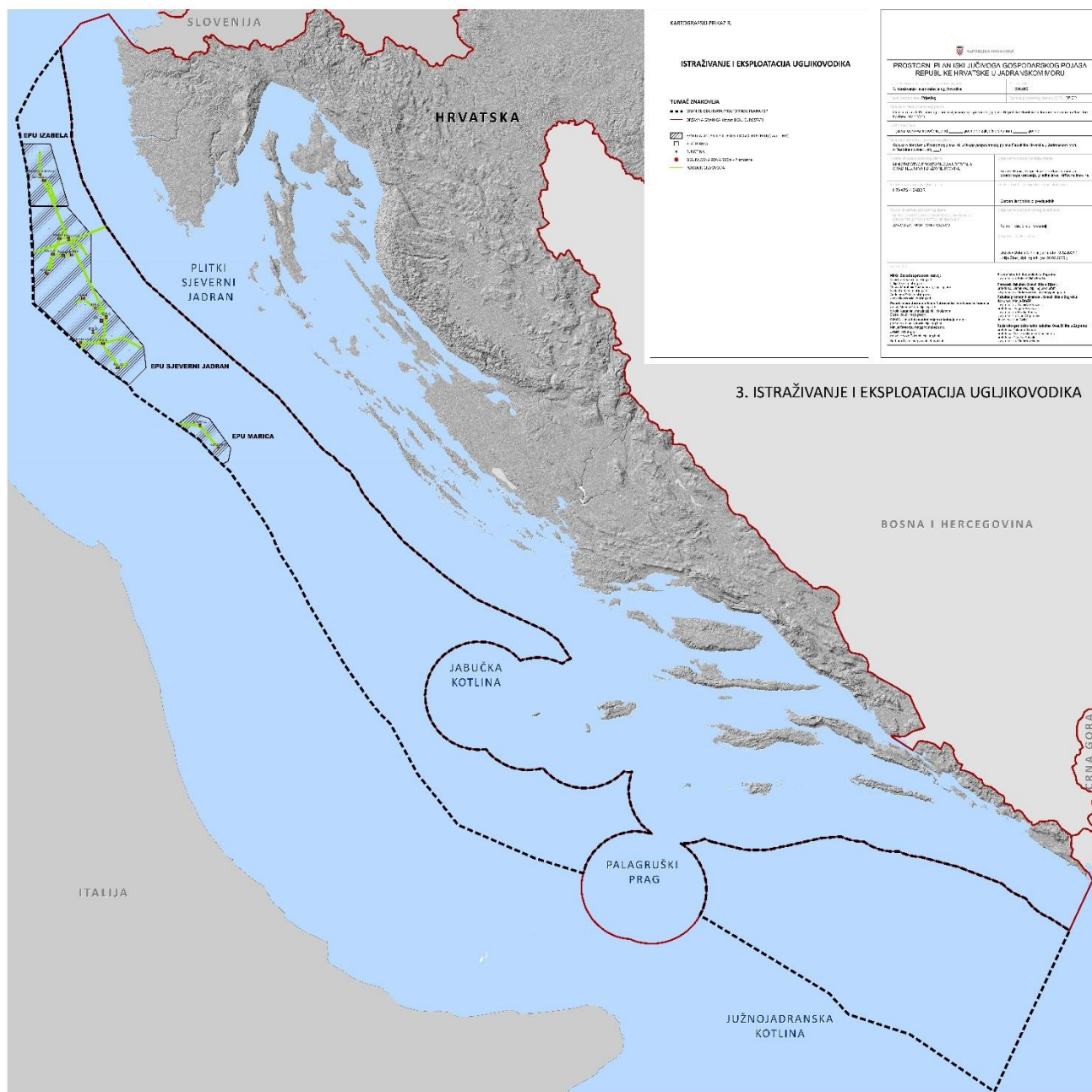
LEGEND

- ■ ■ PLAN SCOPE
- STATE BORDER
- ▢▢▢ AREAS FOR POTENTIAL AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT

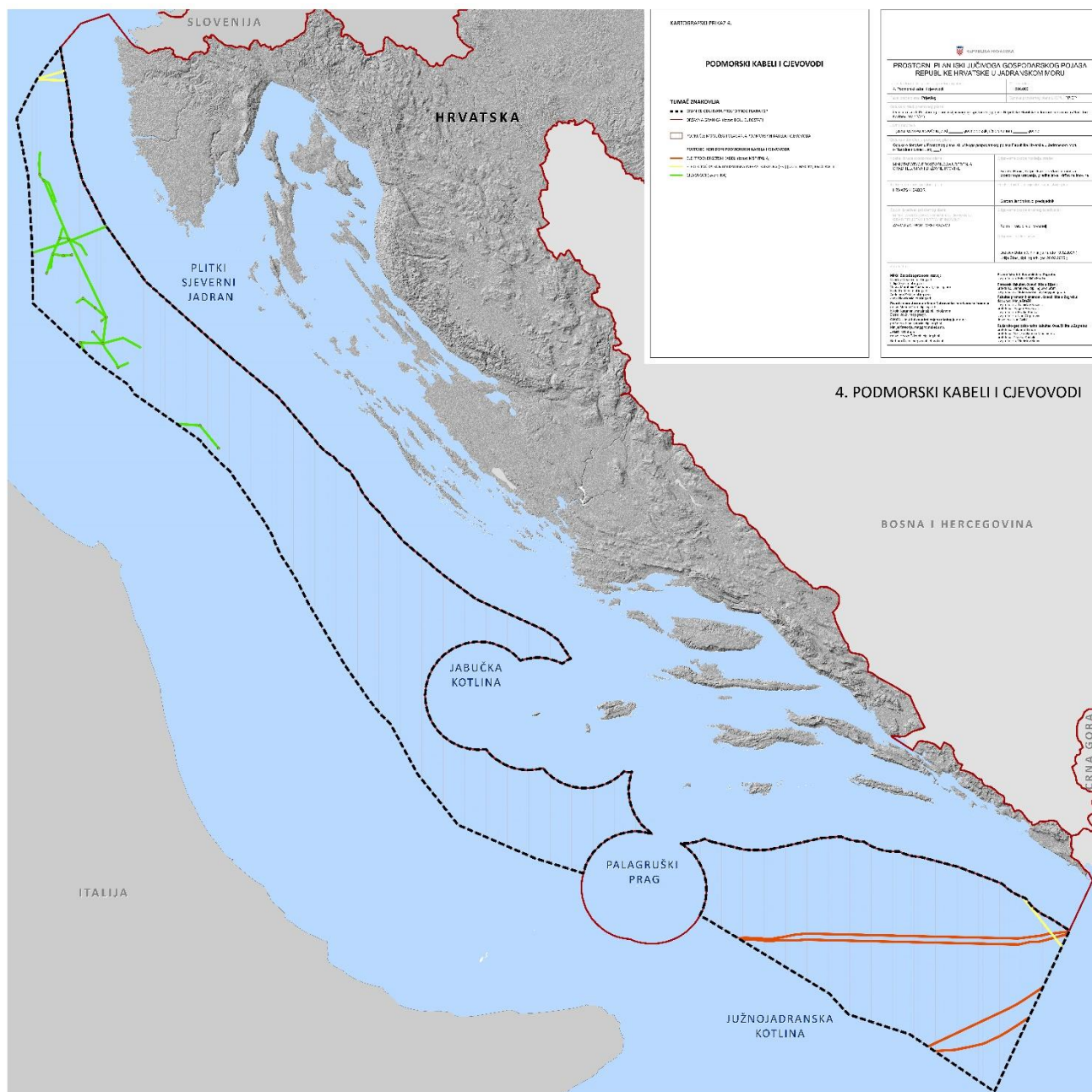
2. Fishing areas



3. Exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons



4. Submarine cables and pipelines



LEGEND

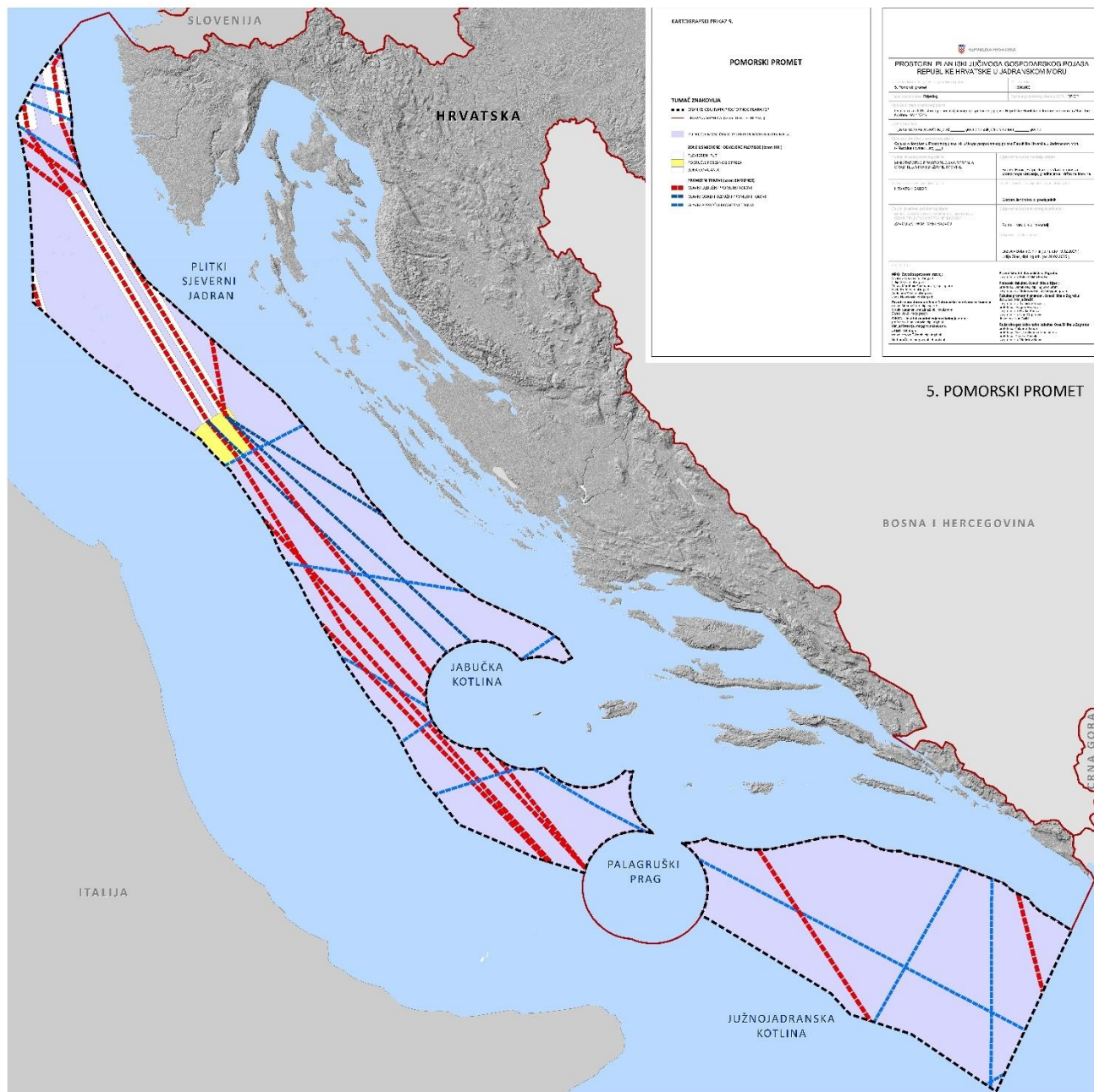
- PLAN SCOPE
 STATE BORDER

- 
- POTENTIAL AREAS FOR LAYING SUBMARINE CABLES AND PIPELINES

CURRENT CORRIDORS OF SUBMARINE CABLES AND PIPELINES

- ELECTRIC POWER CABLES
- ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE
- PIPELINES

5. Maritime traffic



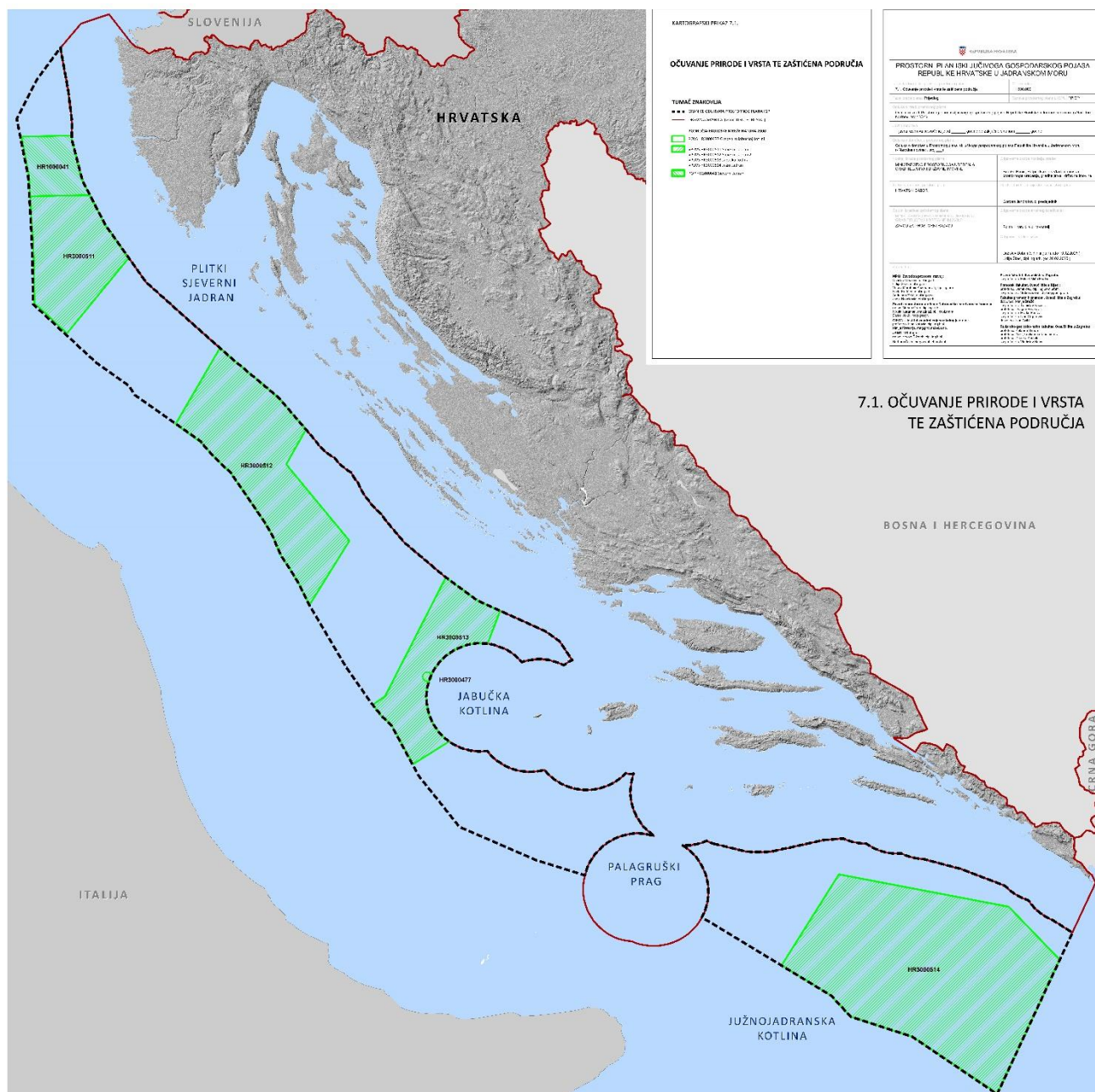
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-  **PLAN SCOPE**
 **STATE BORDER**
 **MARITIME TRAFFIC AREA**
TRAFFIC SEPARATION AND ROUTING ZONES
 SEAWAY /MARITIME TRANSPORT ROUTE
 SPECIAL CAUTION AREA
 SEPARATION ZONE
TRAFFIC FLOWS
 MAIN LONGITUDINAL TRAFFIC FLOWS
 MAIN COASTAL LONGITUDINAL TRAFFIC FLOWS
 MAIN TRANSVERSE TRAFFIC FLOWS

[illegible]

- PLAN SCOPE
- STATE BORDER
- POTENTIAL AREAS FOR MILITARY TRAINING
- DISPOSAL AREAS OF UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE
- DANGER AREAS IN THE AIRSPACE
- BOUNDARY OF THE ZAGREB FLIGHT INFORMATION REGION (FIR ZAGREB)

7.1. Nature and species conservation and marine protected areas



LEGEND

- ■ ■ PLAN SCOPE
— STATE BORDER

NATURA 2000 ECOLOGIC NETWORK AREAS

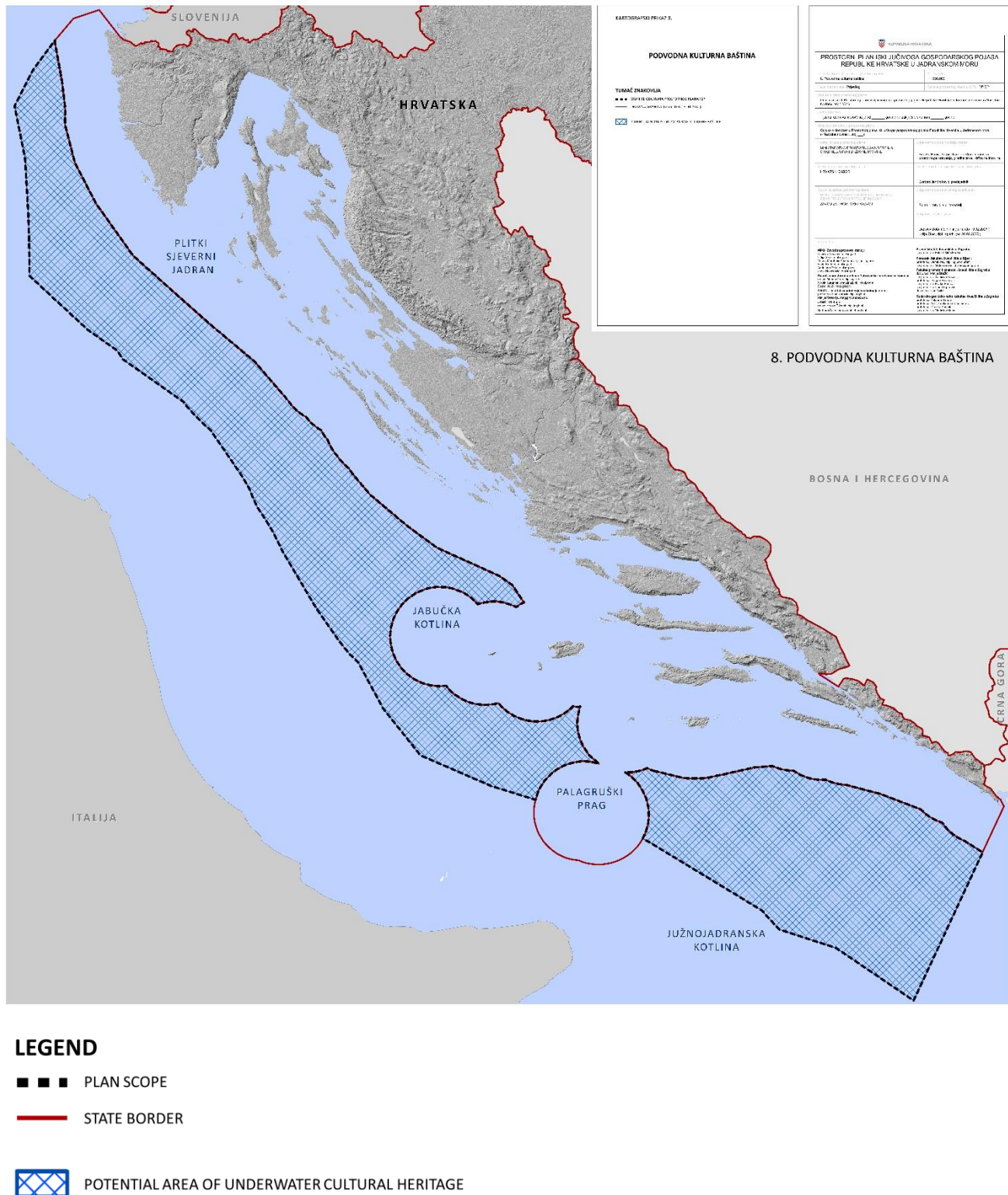
- | | |
|---|--|
|  | SCI HR3000477 Reefs in the Jabuka/Pomo Pit |
|  | pSCI HR3000511 Northern Adriatic 1
pSCI HR3000512 Northern Adriatic 2
pSCI HR3000513 Jabuka/Pomo Pit
pSCI HR3000514 Southern Adriatic |
|  | SPA HR1000041 Northern Adriatic |

7.2. OČUVANJE PRIRODE I VRSTA TE ZAŠTIĆENA PODRUČJA (STANIŠTA)

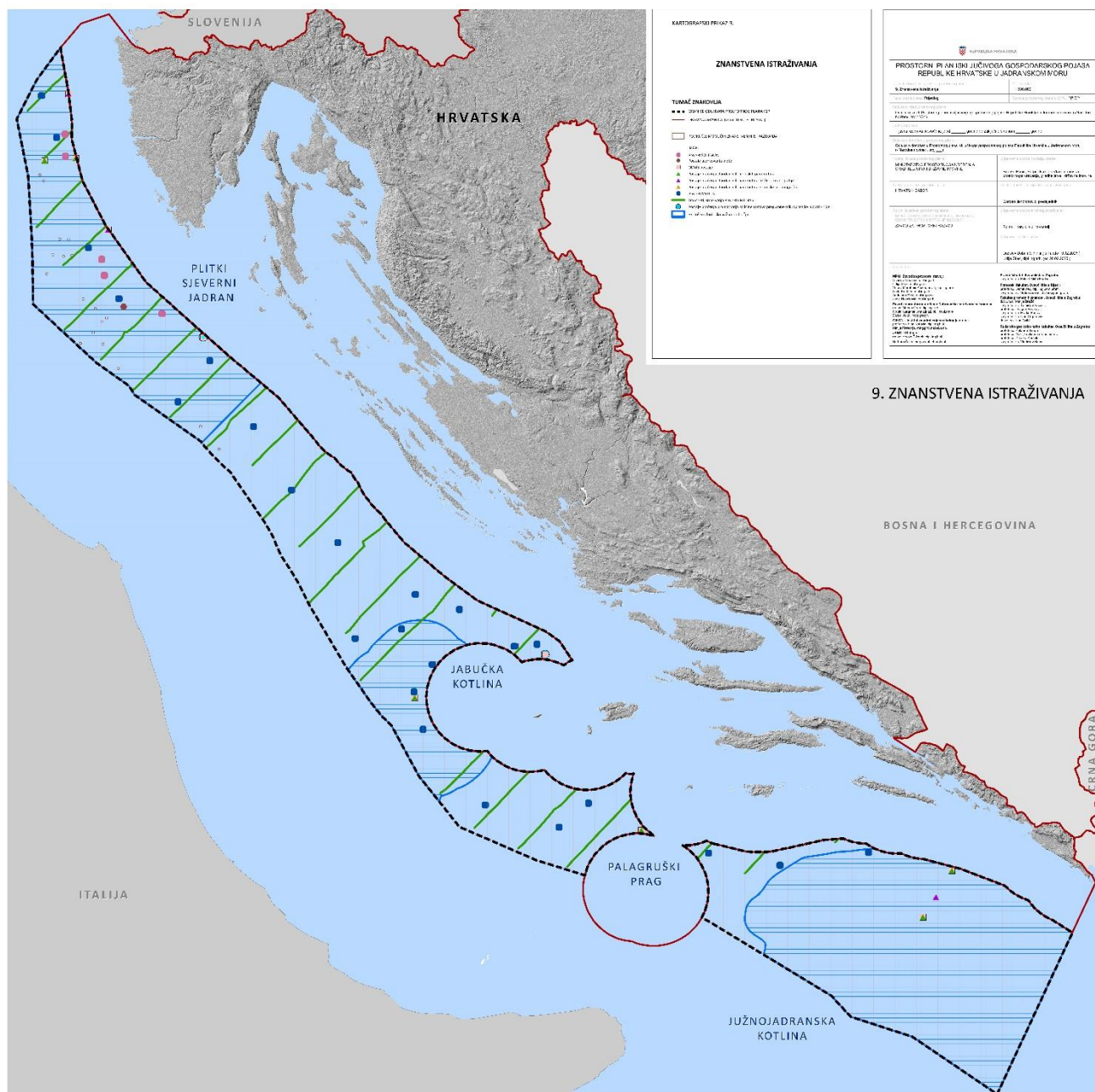
■ ■ ■ PLAN SCOPE
— STATE BORDER

A5.25: Circalittoral fine sands
A5.26: Circalittoral muddy sands
A5.35: Circalittoral sandy mud
A5.36: Circalittoral fine muds
A5.38: Biocenoses of Mediterranean muddy detritic bottoms
A5.39: Communities of Mediterranean coastal terrigenous muds
A5.46: Communities of Mediterranean coastal detritic bottoms
A5.47: Communities of Mediterranean shelf-edge detritic bottoms
A6.511: Facies of sandy muds with <i>Thenea muricata</i>
A6.51: Mediterranean communities of bathyal muds

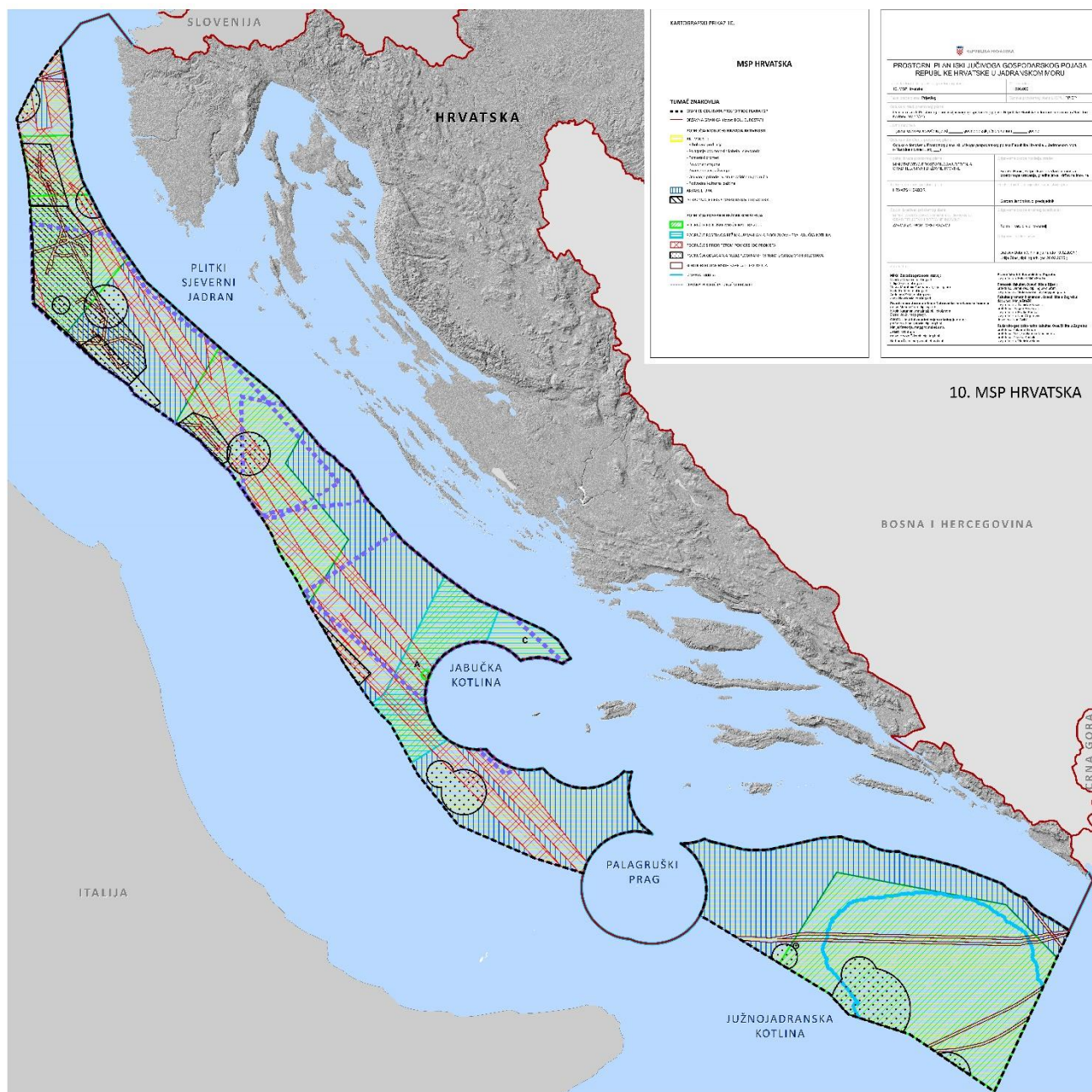
8. Underwater cultural heritage



9. Scientific research



10. MSP Croatia (Synthesis Map)





REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA - REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
Ministarstvo prostornoga uređenja, graditeljstva i državne imovine
Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets