

SEA SCREENING TEMPLATE

Part A – Plan/Programme (PP) and Responsible Authority

Title of PP: Master Plan to Support a Sustainable Diving Industry for Malta

Responsible Authority: Malta Tourism Authority

Contact Person: Mr Josef Formosa Gauci

Position: Chief Executive Officer

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Date: 5 March 2012

Part B – Key Facts

Responsible Authority:
Malta Tourism Authority (MTA)

Title of PP:
Master Plan to Support a Sustainable Diving Industry for Malta

Purpose of PP:
The Objectives of the Master Plan are to provide:

- An overview of diving in Malta - facilities available, quality of dive sites, infrastructure on the coast, safety measures available for divers;
- A comparison of the local diving situation with Malta's chief competing destinations;
- A gap analysis;
- Identification of short-, medium-, and long-term issues to ensure the sustainability of the diving sector;
- Development of a strategy for the diving sector;
- An assessment of the requirements of other competent authorities; and
- Proposals for upgrading various diving sites.

Is the PP the result of legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? Explain.

The Master Plan is not required by legislative or regulatory provisions. Although the Tourism Policy mentions the desire to have a Master Plan, this is not considered an administrative provision because it does not follow a formal procedure, it is simply a Government commitment.

Period covered by PP:

The period is not specified and there is no administrative or legal provision regarding this.

Envisaged Frequency of Updates:

The frequency of updates is not specified and there is no administrative or legal provision regarding this.

Area covered by PP (ideally also attach map):

The island of Malta (excluding Gozo and Comino).

Summary of PP content:

The Master Plan contains three main sections:

The introductory section describes the current state of the industry including both the product and the diving as a form of tourism. It presents a gap analysis of the industry and compares Malta's product to other diving destinations. The Maltese marine environment is also described. The Master Plan then identifies four main short to medium term strategic objectives. These are: Upgrade shore and boat dives sites, encourage further marketing of the product, ensure that dive sites are better managed and protected, and diversify the product through a range of initiatives including scuttling of wrecks and creation of artificial reefs. The final part of the Master Plan deals with the implementation of the objectives.

Part C – SEA Criteria

SEA Criterion	Yes/No (no other answer except Yes/No)	Explanation
<p>Is the PP subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority</p> <p>OR</p> <p>prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government (Regulation 3)</p>	No.	<p>The MTA took the lead to facilitate the production of the Master Plan but is not necessarily responsible for its implementation; other entities can take the proposals forward depending on their remit (e.g. MEPA for MPAs, TM for navigational issues including mooring buoys; NGOs for specific other activities; line ministries for specific interventions on site)</p>
<p>Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Regulation 3)</p>	No.	<p>The Master Plan is not required by legislative or regulatory provisions. Although the Tourism Policy mentions the desire to have a Master Plan, this is not considered an administrative provision because it does not follow a formal procedure, it is simply a Government commitment.</p>
<p>Is the PP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use</p> <p>AND</p> <p>does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Regulation 4(2)(a))</p>	No.	<p>Diving is a recreational pursuit that is promoted as a tourism product (like horse-riding, abseiling, walking, etc), but is not in itself a tourism activity and hence the Plan is not prepared specifically for tourism.</p> <p>The Master Plan does not set the framework for future development consent for projects in Annexes I and II of the EIA Directive.</p>
<p>Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Articles 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Regulation 4(2)(b))</p>	Yes	<p>The scuttling of wrecks or creation of artificial reefs in Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) could require an Appropriate Assessment. This would need to be considered within a specific project</p>

SEA Criterion	Yes/No (no other answer except Yes/No)	Explanation
		proposal.
<p>Does the PP determine the use of small areas at local level</p> <p>OR</p> <p>is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Regulation 4(2)(a) (Regulation 4(3))</p>	No	The Plan is formulated at a national level, however interventions will be at a local level.
<p>Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Regulation 4(4))</p>	Yes	Yes. Part of the Plan recommends the scuttling of vessels or other structures for the creation of artificial reefs; such projects require an EIA but would need to be considered on their own merits.
<p>Is the PP likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Regulation 4(5))</p>		Any land interventions carried out to improve the diving product are not likely to be significant. There may be significant impacts on the marine environment, some of which may be beneficial. Significance of impacts will largely depend on the site and therefore these impacts will be assessed at EIA level, if the scale of intervention warrants one.
<p>Is the PP's sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency</p> <p>OR</p> <p>is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Is it a financial or budget PP?</p>	No	

Part D – Likely Significance of Effects on the Environment

Responsible Authority: Malta Tourism Authority

Title of PP: Master Plan to Support a Sustainable Diving Industry for Malta

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment	Likely to have significant environmental effects? Yes/No (no other answer except Yes/No)	Summary of significant environmental effects (negative and positive)
the degree to which the PP sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	No	The only type of projects that could emerge from the Master Plan that could have a significant effect on the environment relate to scuttling of wrecks and creation of artificial reefs. However, these projects would not affect the national environment but the environment of the area they are implemented, rendering the impact potentially significant at a local level not a national level.
the degree to which the PP influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	No	The Master Plan is very specific and aimed at one sector of recreation / sports. It is unlikely that there would be significant interaction with plans in a hierarchy. The Diving Master Plan for Gozo and Comino would be synergistic.
the relevance of the PP for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	Yes (positive)	The aim of the Master Plan is to promote sustainable diving at a national level, thereby promoting the concept of sustainable development.
environmental problems relevant to the PP	No	Rather than addressing environmental problems directly the Master Plan is aimed at creating a sustainable diving industry that respects the marine environment. Environmental benefits would only accrue as an indirect effect of the Plan.
the relevance of the PP for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. PPs linked to waste management or water protection)	No.	The Master Plan does not address the requirements of Community legislation.

the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	No	Impacts of any projects emerging from the Master Plan are likely to be localised. Scuttling of wrecks and creation of artificial reefs, although not listed in the EIA Directive, may require an EIA under local legislation.
the cumulative nature of the effects	No	Impacts of any projects emerging from the Master Plan are likely to be localised. Scuttling of wrecks and creation of artificial reefs, although not listed in the EIA Directive, may require an EIA under local legislation.
the transboundary nature of the effects	No	No transboundary impacts are anticipated from any of the proposed projects as the impacts are localised.
the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	No	Risks to human health are not expected to be significant on a national level as the measures proposed are aimed at a sustainable diving industry.
the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	No	The proposed interventions on land are minor and are focussed on assisting divers to better use the site and include access arrangements, signage, and installation of security equipment. Marine interventions relate to installation of mooring buoys, marker buoys, designation of areas, fishing restrictions, and improving the product through scuttling of wrecks and creation of artificial reefs. None of the proposed measures are likely to give rise to impacts on a national level. Most impacts would be positive and localised.
the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values (iii) intensive land-use	No	The proposed interventions on land are minor and are focussed on assisting divers to better use the site and include access arrangements, signage, and installation of security equipment. Marine interventions relate to installation of mooring buoys, marker buoys, designation of areas, fishing restrictions, and improving the

		product through scuttling of wrecks and creation of artificial reefs. None of the proposed measures are likely to give rise to impacts in vulnerable areas.
the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	No	It is unlikely that the minor interventions proposed on land would significantly affect any landscapes, protected or otherwise.

Part E – Summary of Environmental Effects

(Provide a summary of the significant environmental effects of the PP)

As described above the Master Plan is not likely to generate significant environmental effects on a national scale, as most measures proposed are "soft measures" such as marketing the diving product. Infrastructure interventions on land are considered relatively minor and mainly relate to access (roads, ramps, steps, and ladders), although other areas of intervention include security improvements (lights and CCTV) and management interventions (for example, bins and dedicated parking areas).

Some marine interventions relate to protection of the marine environment. Provision of mooring buoys is seen as relevant to protect the benthic environment against anchor damage. Addressing issues such as conflicting uses (fish farms and sewage outfalls in the vicinity of dive sites), implementing fishing restrictions in diving areas, designation of marine protected areas, better coordination with port authorities, and anchorage prevention are all considered to beneficially impact the marine environment. In terms of marine infrastructure the Master Plan proposes the scuttling of wrecks and creation of artificial reefs. While it is recognised that these structures have the potential to attract fish and other marine life, it is also recognised that impacts on the benthos could ensue from siting of these structures. Impacts are not considered major at a national level.

Part F – Screening Outcome

Screening is required under the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2010 (Legal Notice 497 of 2010). It is our view that:

- An SEA is required because the PP falls under the scope of Regulation 4(3) of the Regulations and is likely to have significant environmental effects
- An SEA is required because the PP falls under the scope of Regulation 4(4) of the Regulations and is likely to have significant environmental effects
- An SEA is not required because the PP is unlikely to have significant environmental effects.

Mr Josef Formosa Gauci, CEO

Name of Officer responsible for the Screening Report



Signature of Officer responsible for the Screening Report

Malta Tourism Authority

Name of Responsible Authority

5 March 2012

Date

Notes to Responsible Authorities:

1. The SEA Focal Point cannot provide any feedback to incomplete Screening Templates
2. All responsible authorities should provide the SEA Focal Point with an original signed copy of each Screening Template prepared
3. All responsible authorities should provide the SEA Focal Point with a copy of the public notification which is obligatory under Regulation 4(7) of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2010.

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