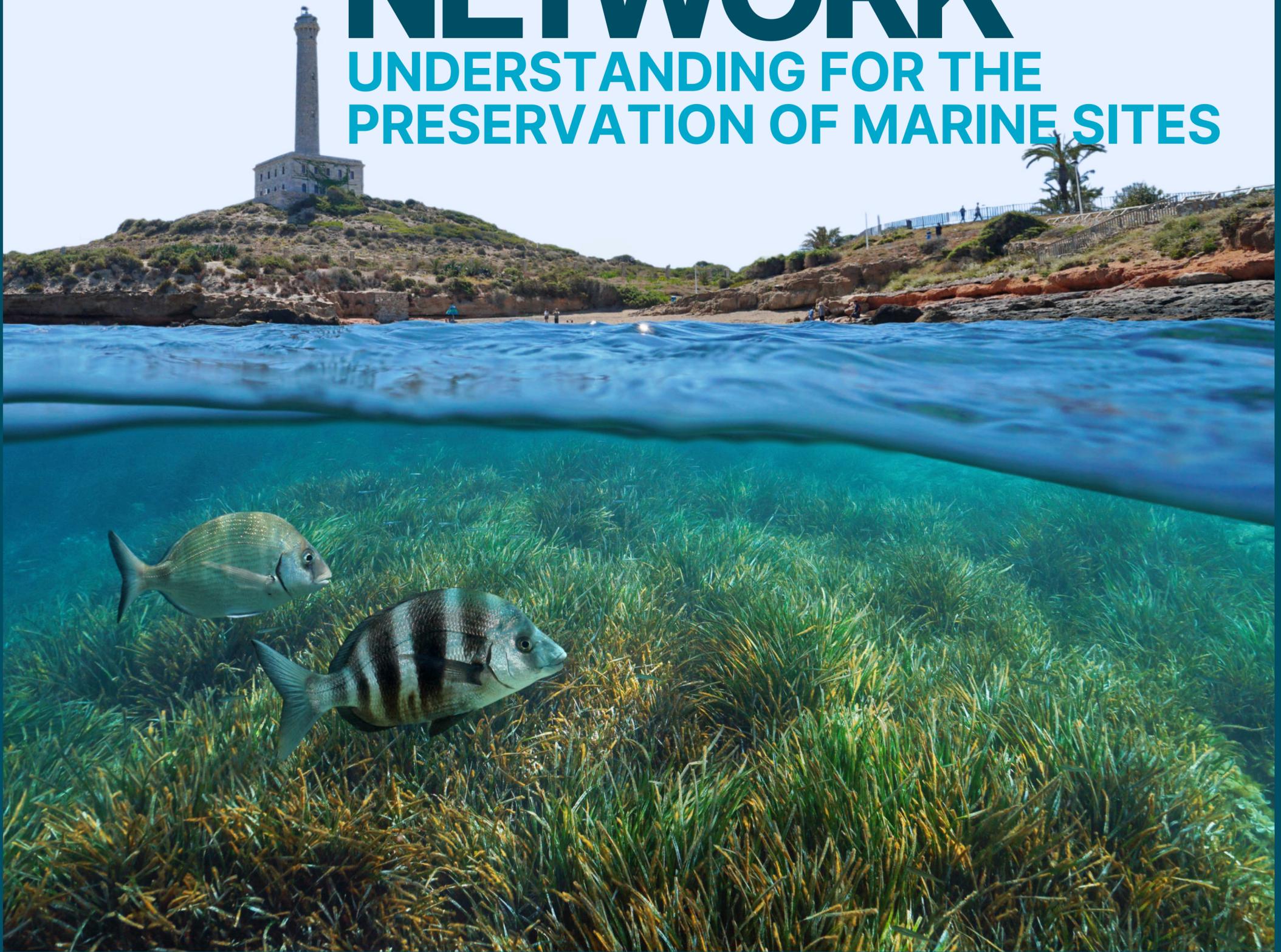


NATURA 2000 NETWORK

UNDERSTANDING FOR THE PRESERVATION OF MARINE SITES



VICEPRESIDENCIA
TERCERA DEL GOBIERNO
MINISTERIO
PARA LA TRANSICIÓN ECOLÓGICA
Y EL RETO DEMOGRÁFICO



WHAT IS THE NATURA 2000 NETWORK?

It consists of the world's largest ecological network, and supports the conservation of the most valuable sites and habitats on the European continent.

The sites included in the Natura 2000 Network, established following the European Birds and Habitats Directives, are made up of:

SCIs	SPAs	SACs
		
Sites of Community Importance	Special Protection Areas for birds	Special Areas of Conservation for habitats and species

THE MAIN INSTRUMENT FOR NATURE CONSERVATION IN EUROPE



The Natura 2000 Network covers over 18% of the European Union's land surface and over 9% of its marine territory. It is the main instrument for nature conservation in the European Union.

In Spain, this network comprises 27,35% of land surface and has already surpassed 15,82 % of marine surface, becoming one of the countries that has contributed the most in Europe.

NATURA 2000 NETWORK SITES IN THE SPANISH MEDITERRANEAN

In Spain, the Mediterranean Sea bathes the shores of five autonomous regions: Catalonia, the Valencian Community, the Region of Murcia, Andalusia and the Balearic Islands, as well as the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla.

128 marine or maritime-terrestrial sites

The Natura 2000 Network in the Spanish Mediterranean is made up of a total of 128 marine or maritime-terrestrial sites, that together add up to **more than 4 million hectares**. In total, these sites **comprise 16 % of Spanish waters** in this marine region.



Map key

-  SACs
-  SCIs
-  SPAs

NATURA 2000 NETWORK

BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The protection of these marine sites provides multiple services that contribute to welfare.



COMPATIBLE HUMAN ACTIVITIES

The spaces included in the Natura 2000 Network establish specific protection and management measures, to make sure that any human activities undertaken are compatible with a favourable conservation status for the natural heritage preservation.

With that goal, management plans are developed for these protected areas, including detailed guidelines to guarantee that human activities do not compromise the integrity of ecosystems and biodiversity.



HABITATS AND SPECIES OF COMMUNITY INTEREST

Sandbanks permanently covered by shallow marine waters

They can be covered by sand or also hold marine plant life, which helps the development of other lifeforms on the sea floor.

Reefs

They are considered megahabitats due to the great diversity of life that they give refuge to. There exists a wide variety of types within this kind of habitat, from coral communities to seaweed and bivalve shell covered floors.

Posidonia beds (*Posidonia oceanica*)

By generating oxygen, they are the true lungs of the Mediterranean and one of the most valuable assets of our seafloors. *Posidonia oceanica* is a marine plant that cannot be found anywhere else on Earth, only in the Mediterranean, and serves an important function in processes like sediment filtration, seabed stability, and refuge for other animal species, as well as helping to keep beach sand in place.

Submerged or semisubmerged marine caves

When the tide rises, these sites are totally or partially submerged under the sea. On their walls and surfaces live different types of seaweed and marine invertebrates, creating very special and particular habitats.

Submarine structures made by leaking gases

Rocky structures created by carbonated minerals precipitation from microbial activity. They can form columns of up to 4 meters high.



Loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*)

📍 Warm seas and oceans. Mediterranean and Atlantic waters

Conservation status: Vulnerable (IUCN)

Description: It is the most common marine turtle in the Mediterranean. It makes long migration voyages between its feeding zones and the beaches where it lays its eggs. In Spain, they usually nest on the Mediterranean coast, especially in Catalonia, the Valencian Community and the Balearic Islands.

Common bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*)

📍 Waters of the Mediterranean and Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans

Conservation status: Least Concern (IUCN)

Description: It is a robust dolphin, of a dark gray color with a white underbelly. It can measure up to 4 meters long and can remain submerged for 10 minutes. It swims at an average speed of 5 to 6 knots, although it can reach 20 knots at its highest speed.



Balearic shearwater (*Puffinus mauretanicus*)

📍 Western Mediterranean and Cantabrian coastline

Conservation status: Critically Endangered (IUCN)

Description: Seabird of medium size, with short wings, a small tail, a thin gray beak and dark brown plumage on its top with cream colors on its wings and belly. There are no visible differences between males and females or between younger or older specimens. Its flight is distinguished by quick flapping followed by short glides. It is the most endangered seabird in Europe.



Fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*)

📍 Western Mediterranean, Atlantic Ocean, Alboran and Balearic Sea, and Menorca channel deepwaters

Conservation status: Endangered (IUCN)

Description: Gray coloration with a white underbelly and an irregular spot on its head. It is distinguished by having baleens instead of teeth, characteristic of so called baleen whales. It is the second biggest animal on Earth, reaching a size of up to 24 meters long.





THE LIFE A-MAR PROJECT

UNDERSTANDING, PROTECTING
AND CHERISHING THE SITES OF
THE NATURA 2000 NETWORK

The LIFE A-MAR Natura 2000 project has the objective of spreading and promoting good conservation practices in Natura 2000 Network marine sites. For that, communication and awareness actions that specifically target the Mediterranean marine sites on Natura 2000 Network are undertaken.

OBJECTIVES



Increase the information available about these sites and promote their protection through citizen awareness initiatives.



Expand awareness of the existence of protected marine sites.



Provide training for managers and users of the Natura 2000 Network marine sites.



Promote good practices and sustainable behaviours in these sites.



Promote an active citizenship in the conservation of nature.





PARTNERS

The LIFE A-MAR project is coordinated by the Italian Federation of Parks and Natural Reserves (Federparchi – Europarc Italia) and has as partners Triton Research, Lipu and Fundación Biodiversidad of the Ministry for the Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge, which powers the activities of LIFE A-MAR in Spain. It includes contributions from the European Union's LIFE Program. Among the co-financiers figure the Asinara National Park, the Tuscan Archipelago National Park and the Cinque Terre National Park.





More information:



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