



# Life CONCEPTU MARIS

## Knowing and protecting offshore cetaceans and sea turtles in the Mediterranean Sea

2022-2026

### THE PROJECT

Abandoned fishing gear, maritime traffic, plastic pollution. The negative effects caused by human activities, to the detriment of **cetaceans** and **sea turtles** in the **Mediterranean**, are increasingly evident. It has therefore become urgent to know better the distribution of the most widespread species in order to develop **effective conservation strategies**.

### THE OBJECTIVES

Thanks to data on the distribution of species and their ecological behaviour, CONCEPTU Maris researchers can assess the **impact of risk factors** throughout the year, identifying the **important sites for the conservation** of the most threatened species.

The information gathered will also make it possible to develop new tools that facilitate the **choice of effective conservation** and risk factor mitigation measures and will foster **international cooperation** for the protection of these animals.



Loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*) - Canva photo archive

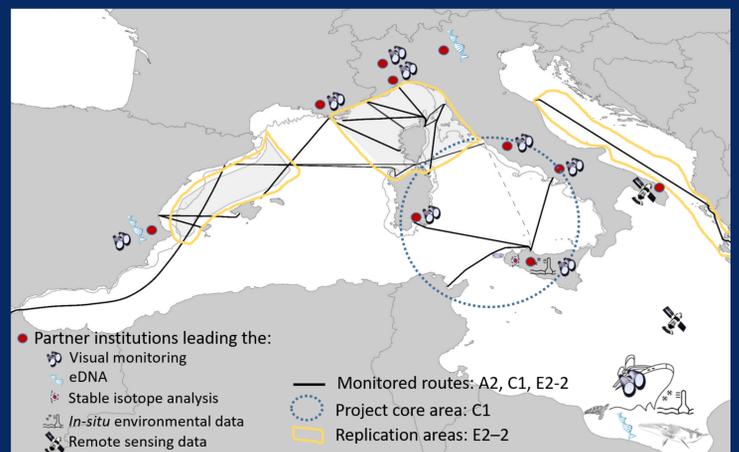
### THE SPECIES

#### Cetaceans

- Fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*)
- Sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*)
- Common dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*)
- Long-finned pilot whale (*Globicephala melas*)
- Risso's dolphin (*Grampus griseus*)
- Striped dolphin (*Stenella coeruleoalba*)
- Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*)
- Cuvier's beaked whale (*Ziphius cavirostris*)

#### Sea turtles

- Loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*)
- Leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*)
- Green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*)



### TARGETED AREA

The project is initially conducted in a large area of the southern Tyrrhenian Sea. The procedures are then also replicated in the Adriatic and Eastern Ionian Sea, in the Pelagos Sanctuary and in the Spanish corridor for the migration of cetaceans, north of the Balearic Islands.

### THE ACTIONS

Using **ferries as real research vessels**, LIFE CONCEPTU Maris project aims to increase knowledge on the marine ecosystem, combining traditional research with **new technologies**, in particular:

- detection of stable isotopes and microscopic traces of DNA (**eDNA**) dispersed in the sea by animals;
- **hull sensors** installed on ferries.

Other actions foreseen by the project:

- **monitoring** of fauna, marine litter and maritime traffic from ferries;
- **citizen science** campaigns for citizen involvement in monitoring;
- **training courses** for on-board personnel, to reduce the risk of collision with large cetaceans;
- estimate of the areas with the highest concentration of floating waste and assessment of the **entanglement** risk.



Common dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*) - Canva photo archive

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#### For more information about the project:



The project LIFE20 NAT/IT/001371 CONCEPTU MARIS 'CONservation of CEtaceans and Pelagic sea TUrtles in Med: Managing Actions for their Recovery In Sustainability' is supported by the LIFE programme, the financial instrument for the environment of the European Union.

#### Coordinating Beneficiary:



#### Associated Beneficiaries:



#### With the collaboration of:

