

The main pillars of the project are:

Identifying important biodiversity hotspots for the target species through extensive field surveys using modern methods, such as telemetry (using satellite transmitters placed on the animals), visual recordings from boats and aerial vehicles, acoustic detection of whales and dolphins with hydrophones, and genetic detection of species through environmental DNA.

Mapping economic activities that threaten these species (commercial fishing, tourism, production and transport of energy at sea, maritime traffic), and applying spatial planning methods to select areas suitable for inclusion in the Natura 2000 network.

Developing and operating an integrated monitoring plan to regularly assess the conservation status of the protected species, and establishing an early warning system to ensure immediate protective actions when necessary.

Building the capacity of management authorities for the effective management of the protected areas through the creation of a "Marine Conservation Task Force" and a "Marine Conservation School" for training members of the management units.

Implementing policy actions in collaboration with competent authorities, involved bodies, and stakeholders, as well as public awareness initiatives for the effective protection of marine areas and the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.



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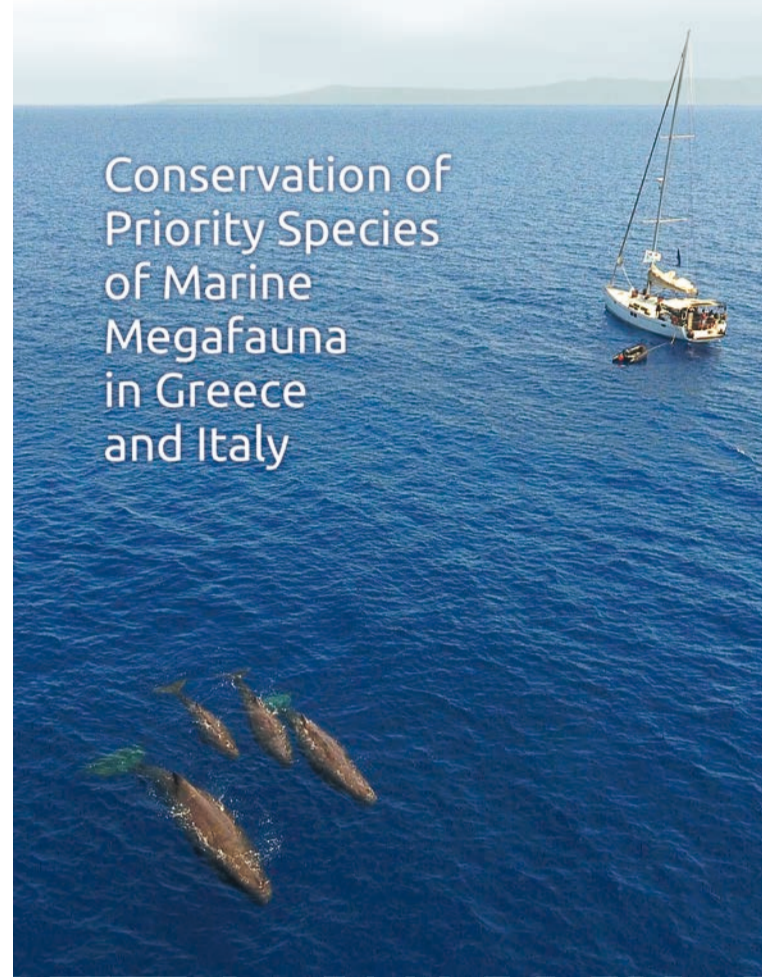
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Conservation of  
Priority Species  
of Marine  
Megafauna  
in Greece  
and Italy



The LIFE MareNatura project aims to address the knowledge gaps and mitigate the threats faced by these nine important marine species. This will be achieved mainly by identifying important marine areas for these species, which will be proposed for inclusion in the Natura 2000 network of marine protected areas. The project is expected to play a decisive role in helping Greece fulfill its obligation under the EU Biodiversity Strategy, which mandates that 30% of sea and land be placed under protection by 2030.



These species can be found in abundance in the Greek and Italian seas. Conservation efforts have, thus far, concentrated on coastal areas that serve as breeding grounds for some of them (e.g., monk seal, loggerhead turtle). Consequently, offshore habitats (feeding grounds, aggregation areas, and migration corridors) remain largely unexplored.

The LIFE MareNatura project is the largest European project for the protection of marine biodiversity ever implemented in Greece. It aims to safeguard nine (9) of Europe's most threatened marine species: the Mediterranean monk seal, the loggerhead sea turtle and the green sea turtle, the cetaceans sperm whale, porpoise, Cuvier's beaked whale, and common dolphin, the seabirds yellowfin shearwater and Audouin's gull.



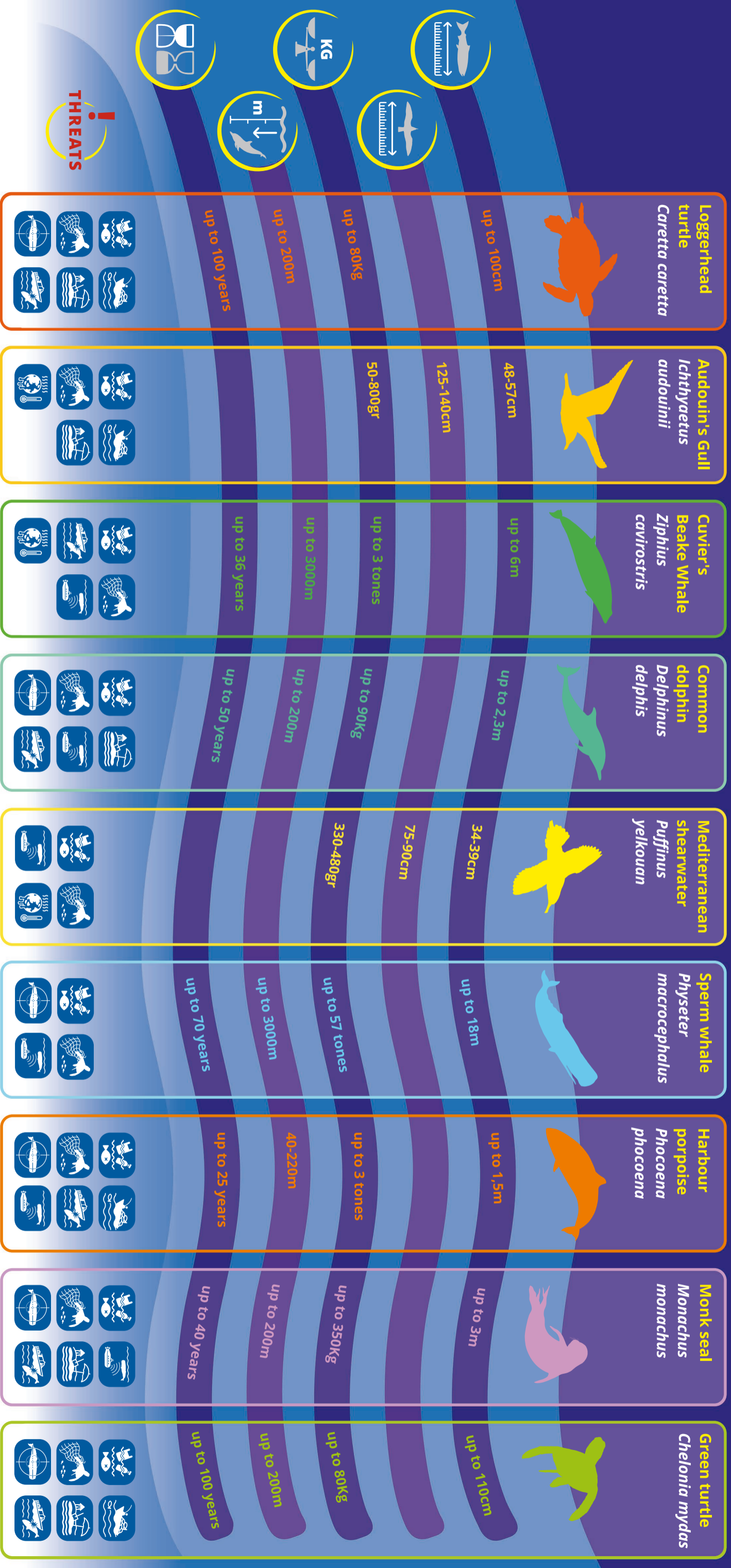
Protecting marine life in a changing world



**MareNatura**  
**LIFE**

# Conservation of priority species of marine megafauna in Greece and Italy

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## THREATS



Underwater noise



By-catch



Climate change



Pollution



Overfishing



Marine traffic



Tourism and recreation



Intentional killing



Co-funded by  
the European Union

