

the project

Tartanet is large-scale, nation-wide initiative for the conservation of the common sea turtle *Caretta caretta* in the Mediterranean sea. Run under the **European Commission Life Natura** programme, it is led by CTS Ambiente and involves **31 different partners**.

Its main objective is to create a **network** of researchers and those involved in the study and conservation of this internationally protected species.

Five new sea turtle rehabilitation centres will open and join the network of the ones already active. A nation-wide data bank is now working; a 24-hour 'turtle emergency response' centre, where sightings of stranded or injured turtles can be reported, has been activated jointly with **Europ Assistance (toll-free number 800-904841)**.

Guidelines will also be proposed for a national action plan to reduce interactions with professional fishing activity.



animals at risk

According to **IUCN**, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, up to **60,000 sea turtles** are accidentally caught in the Mediterranean each year during professional fishing operations. Italy alone accounts for more than 10,000 of these catches, with **mortality rates ranging from 10 to 50%**. Any fishing ship can accidentally catch up to 20 turtles in a single trip.

But there are other threats to sea turtles: **intense ship traffic, tourism on nesting beaches, coastal erosion and sea pollution**. Tartanet will therefore take action in turtle "hot spots", the most sensitive areas for the conservation of the species, where interaction with human activities is greatest.

tartanet centres

The new Tartanet Centres for the rescue and rehabilitation of sea turtles are based in **Maremma Natural Park**, the **Asinara National Park**, the **Punta Campanella Marine Protected Area**, **Brancaleone** (on the ionian coastline of the Province of Reggio Calabria), and the **Gargano National Park**.

These centres are coordinated and follow common standard procedures for the recovery and care of injured animals. Once healed and tagged, sea turtles are released back in the wild.

An intranet links the new centres to existing Tartanet centres located in **Livorno, Nora** (Cagliari), **Policoro** (Matera), **Comiso** (Ragusa), **Cattolica Eraclea** (Agrigento), **Lampedusa, Linosa** and **Riccione** (Rimini). Rehabilitation Centres have a **veterinary clinic** equipped with operating room, X-ray machine, dark room, microscope, and tanks for turtles care.





A network for the conservation of sea turtle in Italy



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The European LIFE Nature programme is a financial tool to promote sustainable development and nature conservation in the EU. Projects supported in this framework include the restoring and maintenance of natural habitats and the conservation of wild flora and fauna. LIFE Nature is also aimed at implementing the Nature 2000 Network, a system of European protected areas.

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Co-financiers
Regione Lazio, Regione Toscana, Parco Nazionale Arcipelago Toscano, Parco Nazionale dell'Asinara, Parco Nazionale del Cilento e Vallo di Diano, Parco Nazionale del Gargano, Provincia Regionale di Agrigento, Provincia di Cagliari, Provincia di Reggio Calabria.

Supporters
Ministero delle Politiche Agricole e Forestali, Comando Generale delle Capitanerie di Porto, Federparchi, Regione Calabria, Comune di Condofuri, Comune di Manfredonia, Acquario Comunale di Livorno, Fondo Siciliano per la Natura, Centro recupero tartarughe Laguna di Nora, Marine Turtle Rescue Centre di Policoro, Europ Assistance, Centro Studi Cetacei ONLUS.

partners



Objectives

Tartanet's main objective is to implement an effective long-term conservation strategy, through the creation of a network of support centres to help reducing the threats to Caretta caretta. In addition to recovering and caring for the turtles accidentally caught during fishing activity, the Centres will be engaged in monitoring the nesting sites, applying low-impact fishery systems and testing TED (Turtle Excluder Device), a device that allows turtles to escape immediately after capture in the net. Specific training sessions are planned both for the operators of the centres and for the fishermen involved in monitoring and recovery activities. A web portal on marine turtles and an awareness programme directed to the general public will ensure the widest exposure and dissemination of information.

friends of turtles

The Tartanet project is developed in cooperation with the Ministry of the Environment and Protection of the Territory, the Ministry of Agricultural and Forestry Policies, and the General Command of the Coast Guard. Partnership is being developed with AGCI Pesca, Punta Campanella Marine Protected Area, Fondazione Cetacea, Legambiente, Lega Pesca, Maremma Natural Park, University of Siena and University of Torino. This project involves three regions (Toscana, Lazio and Calabria), three Provinces (Agrigento, Cagliari, and four National Parks (Arcipelago Toscano, Cilento, Gargano and Asinara), as well as other important institutional players as Acquario di Livorno, Centro Recupero Tartarughe di Policoro, Federparchi, and Fondo Siciliano per la Natura.