

# Funders pledge 60.8M USD to protect the Mediterranean Sea

Covering an area of merely 2.5 million square kilometers, the Mediterranean region hosts some of the richest marine biodiversity. Boasting some of the highest rates of endemic species globally, it holds a distinguished status as one of the most ecologically significant regions, earning the designation of a global marine biodiversity hotspot. The Mediterranean Sea serves as a migratory route and reproductive haven for numerous iconic species, including a wide range of sharks, whales, sea turtles, but also important commercial species like bluefin tuna. However, the delicate balance of its ecosystems faces severe threats from climate change, ocean acidification, pollution, and unsustainable fishing. This is a rapidly increasing threat for Mediterranean livelihoods.

Effective marine protected areas in the Mediterranean are needed to shift this situation. The latest science<sup>1</sup> is telling us that only 8.33% of the Mediterranean is covered by protection. In 95% of this area, regulations are not stronger inside than outside MPAs. In addition, only 0.23%<sup>2</sup> of the Mediterranean is fully or highly protected. Finally, protection is unevenly distributed across political boundaries and eco-regions.

We have seen protection of the Mediterranean Sea evolve over the years, but not rapidly enough. Last year, countries committed to achieving the global 30x30 target<sup>3</sup>. We have no time to lose, it is time for action. We are committed to push for an effective 30% protection by 2030, including 10% strict protection. This means that we will need to make bold decisions and phase out destructive activities, such as bottom trawling, in our protected areas. Close to half of the marine protected area in the Mediterranean is made up of the Pelagos Sanctuary. It deserves stronger management and better protection.

An estimated 277M USD is required to establish a well-managed MPA network covering 30% of the Mediterranean Sea<sup>4</sup>. The Prince Albert II Monaco Foundation alongside fellow philanthropists of the Med Donors roundtable and beyond, including Conservation Collective, Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund, Oceans 5, Pew Bertarelli Ocean Legacy, Segré Foundation, Shark Conservation Fund, Thalassa Foundation and The MedFund are committed to help achieve the 30x30 target in the Mediterranean by contributing at least 47M USD over the next 5 years to make this vision a reality. The Bloomberg Ocean Initiative and Tiffany & Co Foundation also join in the support of national and

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<sup>1</sup> The System of Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas in 2020, MedPAN and UNEP/MAP-SPA/RAC, November 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Claudet J., Loiseau C., Sostres M. & Zupan M., 2020. Underprotected Marine Protected Areas in a Global Biodiversity Hotspot. *One Earth* 2(4), pp 380-384. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.oneear.2020.03.008>.

<sup>3</sup> [Barcelona Convention and Protocols | UNEP MAP](https://www.cbd.int/convention/text), Convention on Biological Diversity: <https://www.cbd.int/convention/text>.

<sup>4</sup> Binet, T., Diazabakana, A., Hernandez, S. (2015). "Sustainable financing of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean: A financial analysis." Vertigo Lab, MedPAN, RAC/SPA, WWF Mediterranean.

global efforts to advance 30x30 in the region. We also acknowledge efforts from public donors such as Global Environment Facility which has committed 13.8M USD to this endeavour.

While this collective commitment, which brings the total amount to 60.8M USD towards the protection of the Mediterranean Sea, is a step in the right direction, further contributions are essential to establish a well-managed network of marine protected areas in the region. We hope that this collaboration will inspire other donors or partners to join forces with us.

HSH the Prince Albert II of Monaco

Signatories:

- Conservation collective
- Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund
- Global Environment Facility
- Oceans 5
- Pew Bertarelli Ocean Legacy
- Prince Albert II Monaco Foundation
- Segré Foundation
- Shark Conservation Fund
- Thalassa Foundation
- The Bloomberg Ocean Initiative
- The MedFund
- Tiffany & Co Foundation