

Pelagos Sanctuary

Legal status	Sanctuary
Foundation year	1999
Foundation text	Tripartite Agreement
Management body	Tripartite Steering Committee (France, Italy, Monaco)
Superficy	87 500 km ²
Management category (IUCN, 1994)	IV



The Sanctuary for the Conservation of Marine Mammals has been a SPAMI since 2001, for the ensemble of its physical and climate conditions make it a Mediterranean pelagic area that is exceptionally productive and rich in living things; it is a hot spot of pelagic biodiversity and a good example of collaboration between the actors involved

Territory



The French-Italian-Monacan Sanctuary, set up by a Tripartite Agreement between the three Governments signed in Rome on 25 November 1999, in the Tyrrhenian-Corsican-Provençal basin, including the coastal waters and pelagic domain of the area.



© Regard du Vivant - F. Larrey / T. Robert



Physical features

The coasts that surround it are basically rocky, except for the eastern coast of Corsica and the Tuscany coast, which present areas of plain.

The terrestrial domain is characterised by the presence of big islands like Corsica and, partially, Sardinia, as well as islands of smaller size.

The continental slope is very narrow along the rocky coasts but better developed along the plain coasts.

The bathymetry is great in the Corsican-Provençal basin (2,500-2,700m.). All the rocky coasts are deeply cut into by underwater canyons which increase the morphological and hydrodynamic diversity.

Specificities and Importance

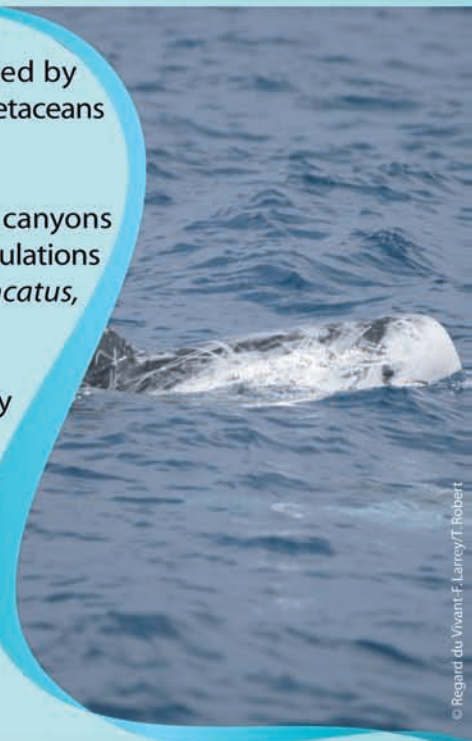


Compared to the rest of the Mediterranean, the Sanctuary is characterised by extremely rich pelagic life, marked by the presence of big pelagics such as the cetaceans (*Balaenoptera physalus*, *Ziphius cavirostris*).

Some are totally pelagic, linked to the continental slope, others to the deep canyons in the area; they represent 12 different species and have greater or smaller populations according to species (*Stenella coeruleoalba*, *Delphinus delphis*, *Tursiops truncatus*, *Grampus griseus*, *Globicephala melas*, *Physeter macrocephalus*).

The species of cetacean that form the central argument for creating the Sanctuary are not uniformly distributed and their distribution is linked to the existence of several ecological facies that constitute a diversified habitat.

Other major zoological groups are protected by the conservation measures all down the trophic chain: birds, turtles, big cephalopods and pelagic selachians.



© Regard du Vivant - F. Larrey / T. Robert



UNEP



RAC/SPA

Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA)
Boulevard du leader Yasser Arafet, B.P. 337 - 1080 Tunis CEDEX - TUNISIA
Tél. : +216 71 206 649 / 485 / 851 - **Fax** : +216 71 206 490
E-mail : car-asp@rac-spa.org
www.rac-spa.org

