



NASTNet - WWF PROJECT

NASTNet : a network to stimulate the conservation of sea turtles in North Africa.



Photo : M. benabdi

Sea Turtles are protected species in the Mediterranean region, and on the national level there are several plans to protect it. Several factors such as sandy beach loss, pollution, overfishing and accidental fishing by various fishing gear and climate change continue to affect these species to varying degrees from region to region. In fact, due to their migration lifestyle, the protection of sea turtles in the Mediterranean requires the preservation of multiple habitats and ecosystems, by all countries bordering the basin, and any weakness or failure of conservation efforts in a country or region may jeopardize conservation efforts at the regional level.

In the recent years, the level of scientific knowledge of Sea turtles in the Mediterranean has been constantly evolving, but with an imbalance between species and regions, important gaps for key topics, such as distribution, major nesting sites and the total number of nests per year, particularly with the emergence of new sites, in the western basin of the Mediterranean. These gaps are more pressing on the southern shores of the Mediterranean, where these shores cover more than 5,800 km of coastline and approximately 800,000 km² of the marine area, i.e. approximately 31.9% of the total area of the Mediterranean.

On the other hand, many initiatives to protect sea turtles at the Mediterranean level are implemented by organizations such as (SPA/RAC, MEDPAN ...) With a satisfactory level of cooperation at the regional level, more effort is required at the semi-regional level, as is the case with the south shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

In this context, fully convinced of the importance of coordinating actions to better protect sea turtles at the Mediterranean level, a group of independent experts, active in the protection of sea turtles across the North African region, has launched the North African Sea Turtle Protection Network (NASTNet) initiative,



This initiative aims to strengthen the coordination of sea turtle conservation efforts among North African countries, develop a network strategy to exchange experiences, support and strengthen the capabilities of partners in the fields of protection and scientific research, seek funding for protection measures as well as coordinate with Mediterranean and international organizations and initiatives active in this field.

Open to all active stakeholders and initiatives in the protection and conservation of sea turtles in North Africa, the network is supported by an advisory committee composed of SPA/RAC, WWF North Africa, CEPF and RASTOMA. The initiative is led by a steering committee, composed of expert group from North African countries (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia).

This newly established network begins its activities with a project called **NASTNet: a network to stimulate the conservation of sea turtles in North Africa**. This project was developed in collaboration between the North African Sea Turtle Conservation Network (NASTNet) and WWF-North Africa, with financial

The main objective of the project

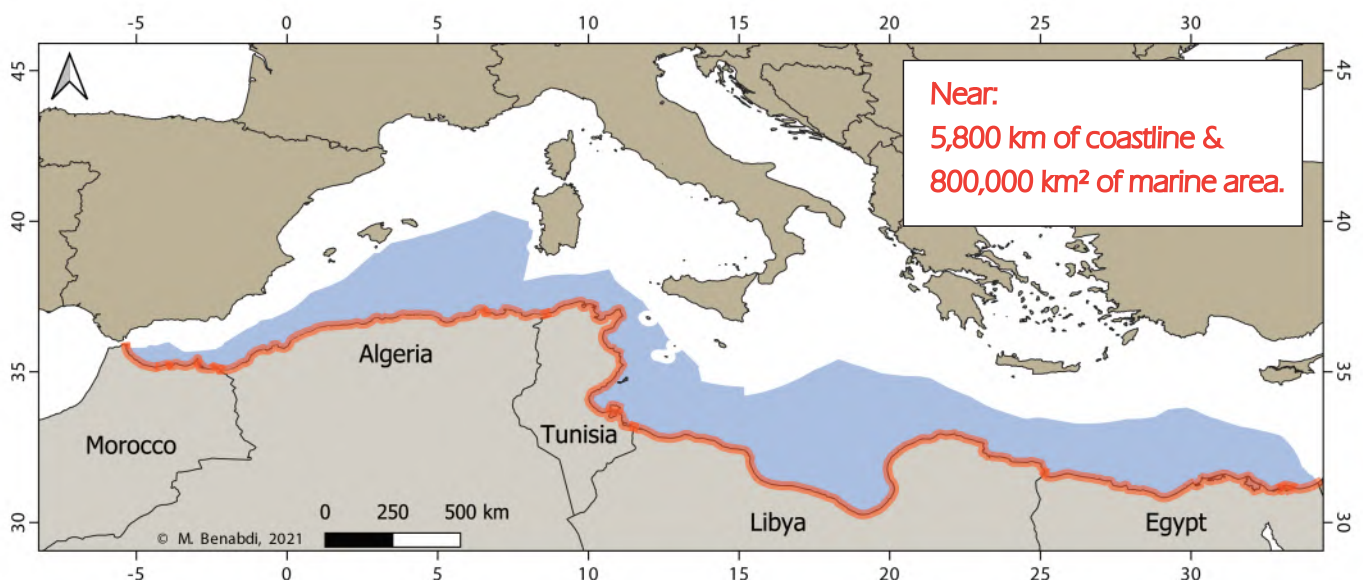
The project aims to strengthen NASTNet by strengthening its means and capabilities to enable it to contribute significantly to the conservation of sea turtles in North African countries and in the Mediterranean basin in general.

Project targets

- Strengthening network governance.
- Strengthen network connections.
- Build the capacity of network members to implement strategies and action plans to protect sea turtles in North Africa.
- Standardize the methods and protocols for the study and monitoring of sea turtles in North Africa.

Project duration : 13 months.

Beneficiary countries : Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia.



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