

# The Mediterranean, a global priority for conservation

Almost **6000** species assessed, **25%\*** threatened, but there are so many more!

## WHO

### Threatened species in the Mediterranean: the real situation

As of today, almost 6000 species have been assessed for their conservation status in the Mediterranean region, and 25%\* were classified as threatened. Of these threatened species, 69% are animals and 31% are plants. The highest percentage of threatened animals are freshwater species (319 species of mollusks and 225 fishes). On the other hand, it is estimated that there are 25000 vascular plant species in the Mediterranean. With just approximately 7% of Mediterranean plants already assessed, 28% of these have already been classified as threatened. With these early figures in hand, most freshwater species and plants have proven to be worthy of particular concern.

Additionally, 32 Mediterranean species are already known to be globally Extinct (EX), or Extinct in the Wild (EW): 11 freshwater fishes; two mammals; one reptile; 14 freshwater mollusks; and four plants.



**EX** Gölçük Toothcarp  
*Aphanius splendens*

Endemic species from Turkey. This species was already Extinct by the 1980s due to the effects of introduced non-native fishes.

\* This percentage is the mid-point value, it assumes that a similar relative proportion of the Data Deficient (DD) species are likely to be threatened, and provides the best estimation of the proportion of threatened species (source IUCN)

## WHERE

### How many threatened species are there in your country?

From North to South and East to West, when it comes to threatened species, each country has its share. In terms of distribution, the highest proportions are located in Spain, Greece and Turkey.

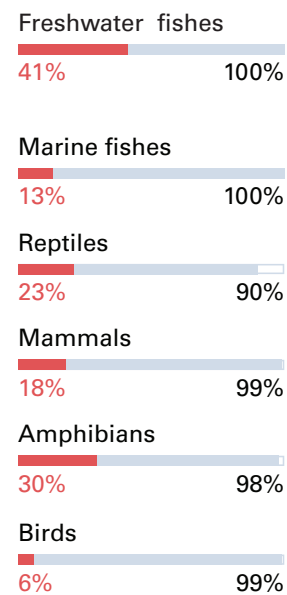


Source: Conservation International

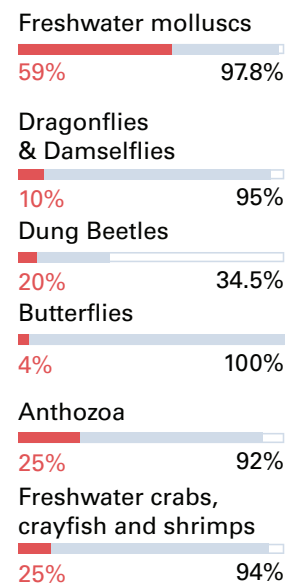
## HOW TO READ THIS GRAPH

- 1 Taxonomic group
  - 2 Total taxa assessed
  - 3 Total threatened taxa
  - 4 Globally threatened species by country
- CR Critically endangered
  - EN Endangered
  - VU Vulnerable
- % estimated completeness of IUCN Red List assessment at Mediterranean and Global level
  - % estimated threatened taxa in Mediterranean region (mid-point)
  - Distribution of threatened taxa by group and country
  - (Bold lines) Main location of threatened taxa

**1 VERTEBRATES**  
**2 2236**  
**3 430:**  
106 CR 148 EN 176 VU

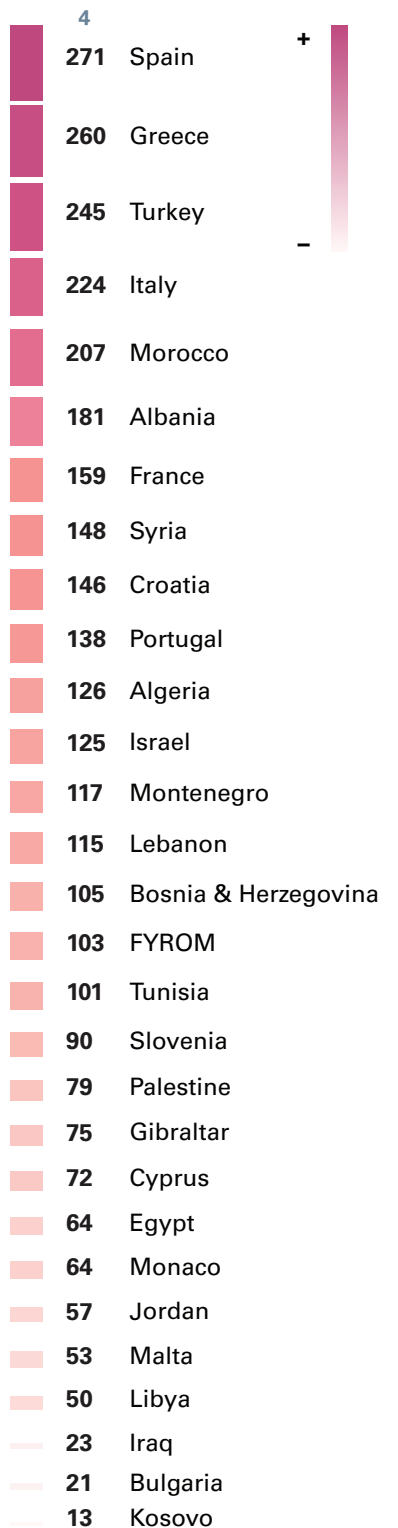


**INVERTEBRATES 1938**  
**470:**  
111 CR 187 EN 172 VU



The Mediterranean covers 1% of the Earth's surface, yet, 10% of the world's plants are found in it.

**PLANTS 1784**  
**396:**  
113 CR 136 EN 147 VU



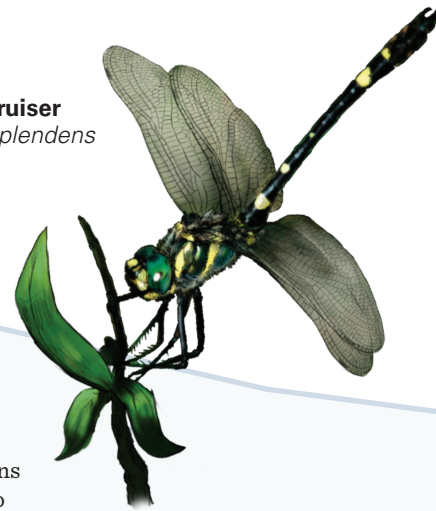
WHY

### The main drivers of extinction

Despite the natural resilience of the Mediterranean species and ecosystems, pressures from increasing human population and development are leading to biodiversity loss, habitat degradation, and elimination. Activities related to natural system modifications, pollution, and agriculture are the main threats affecting the unique biodiversity of the unique, yet fragile, Mediterranean region.

The findings of this research concluded that the main threat to freshwater species appears to be dams, for terrestrial species the primary threat is agriculture. For marine species the main driver is overfishing.

**VU** Splendid Cruiser  
*Macromia splendens*



#### What are Natural system modifications?

Natural system modifications are actions that convert or degrade habitat, often to improve human welfare. They are associated with changes to natural processes such as fire, hydrology, and sedimentation (land reclamation projects, abandonment of managed lands, rip-rap along shoreline,

mowing grass, tree thinning in parks, beach construction, removal of snags from streams, etc.)

Source: The Open Standards

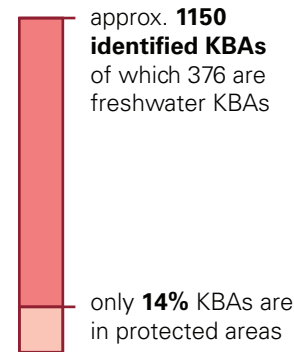
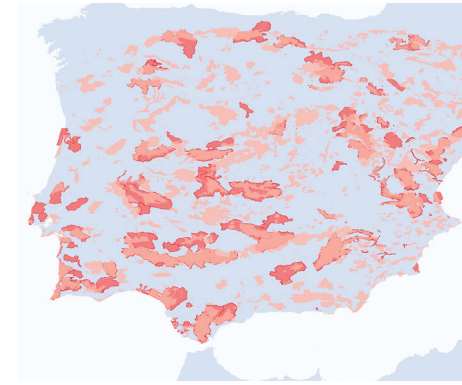
HOW

### How can we halt this decline?

#### KBAs, a good start

KBAs show us where actions need to be taken in order to save species from extinction. They are a key tool to concentrate efforts and resources that will halt this decline, guiding decision-makers in improving and expanding their protected areas networks, and advising the private sector on concrete ways to minimize and mitigate their impact on nature.

The study of 16 countries shows that only 14% KBAs are in a protected area. That leaves 86% KBAs and their endangered inhabitants almost abandoned to their fate, without proper management plans that take their protection into account.

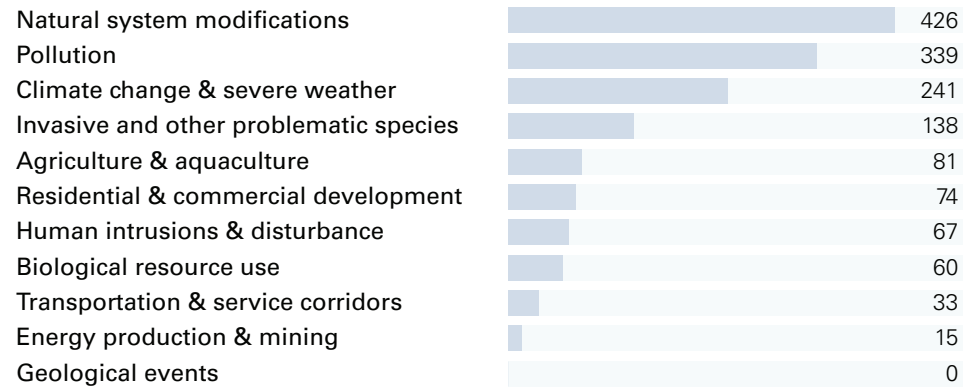


**What is a KBA?**  
Key Biodiversity Areas are ecosystems that contribute significantly to the global persistence of species. These areas of international importance in terms of biodiversity conservation are defined using globally standardized criteria.

**What is a protected area?**  
Protected areas are locations which receive protection because of their recognized natural, ecological or cultural values. There are several kinds of protected areas, which vary by level of protection.

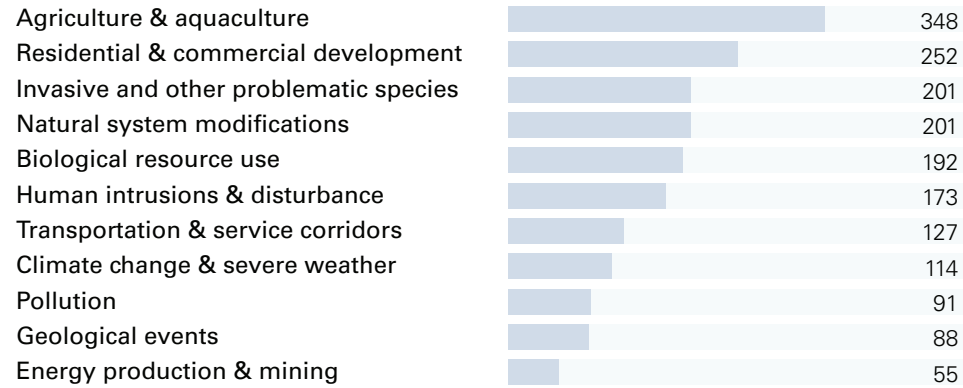
#### FRESHWATER

569 threatened species



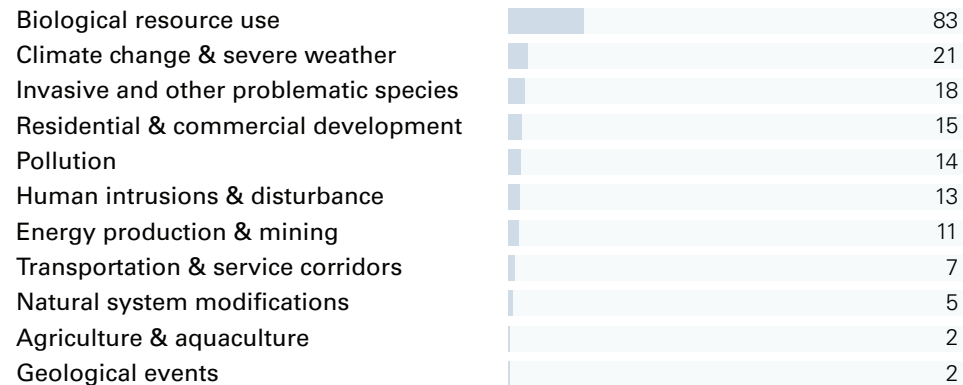
#### TERRESTRIAL

597 threatened species

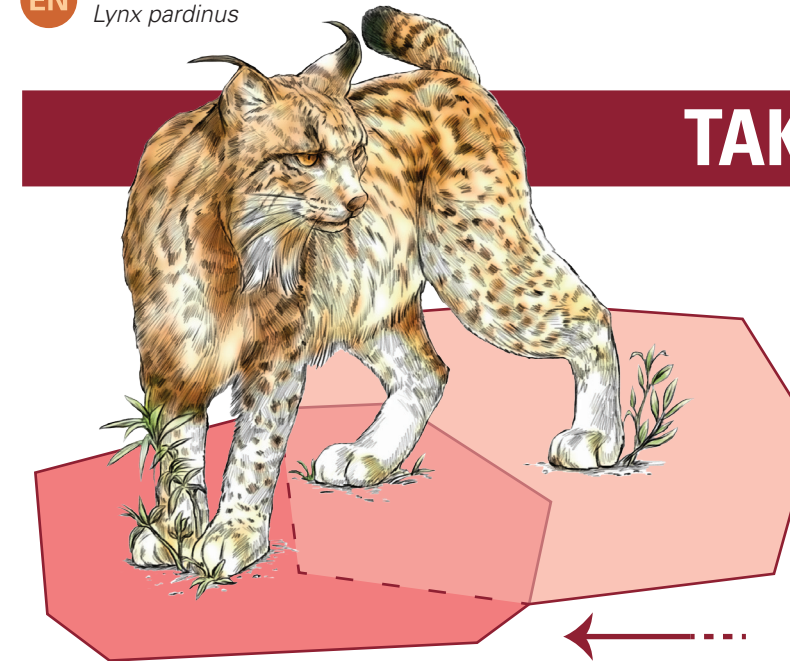


#### MARINE

90 threatened species



**EN** Iberian Lynx  
*Lynx pardinus*



## TAKE ACTION

1. Support the inclusion of KBAs within the boundaries of protected areas.
2. Improve the management plan of protected areas to include species at the border of extinction.



[www.iucn.org/mediterranean](http://www.iucn.org/mediterranean)

[www.iucnredlist.org/regions/mediterranean](http://www.iucnredlist.org/regions/mediterranean)

@IUCN\_Med IUCNMed

infographic design by Sandra Leal

illustrated by Gianpierre Yovera