



The Restoration of Mediterranean Wetlands The urgency to act !

4th October 2022

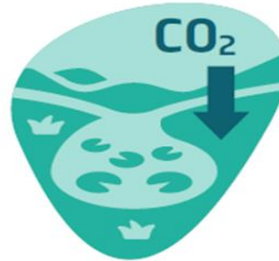


Why are (coastal) wetlands so important?

Biological Super Systems!

Among the most productive ecosystems in the world, comparable to rain forests and coral reefs...

Carbon sinks



Inland and coastal flood defences



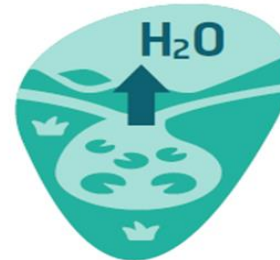
Protection from rising seas



Biodiversity



Water provision & purification

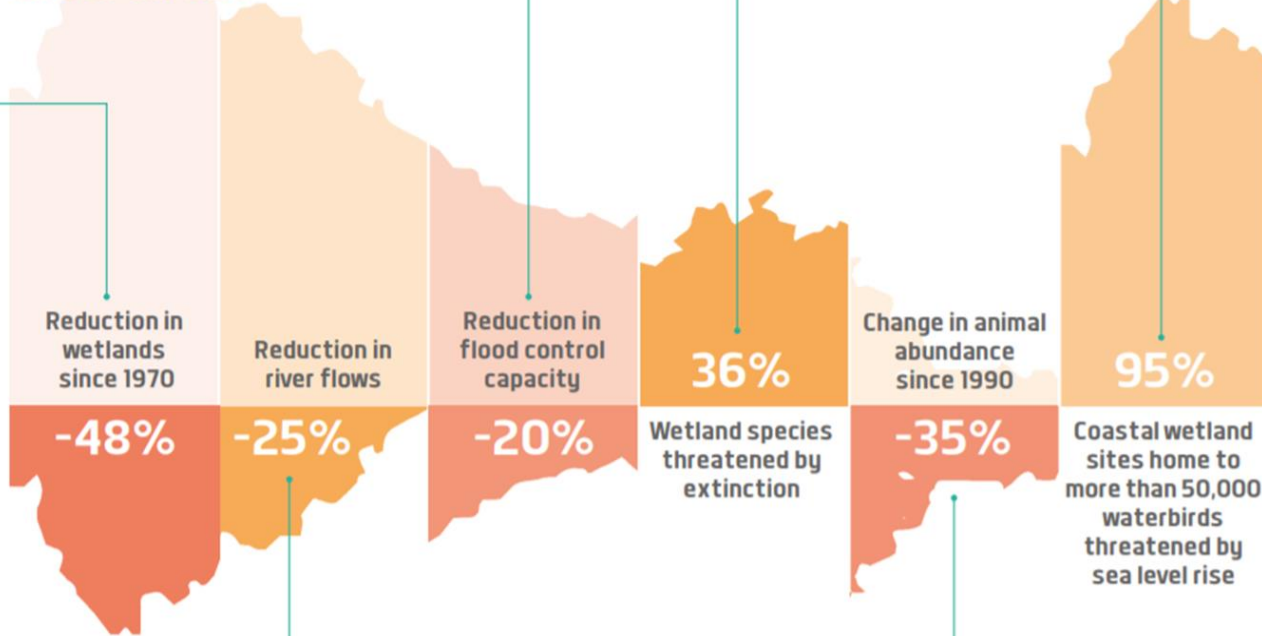


Food provision



Wetlands conservation and restoration: an urgent matter in the Mediterranean

Mediterranean wetlands under threat*



The Mediterranean Basin is a global biodiversity hotspot but also one of the most vulnerable regions in the world to the impacts of global warming 20%

Today wetlands cover some **18.5 million hectares** in the 27 **Mediterranean** countries.

With a very few exceptions, their flooding regimes are now artificially managed, and many of the remaining areas are badly degraded.



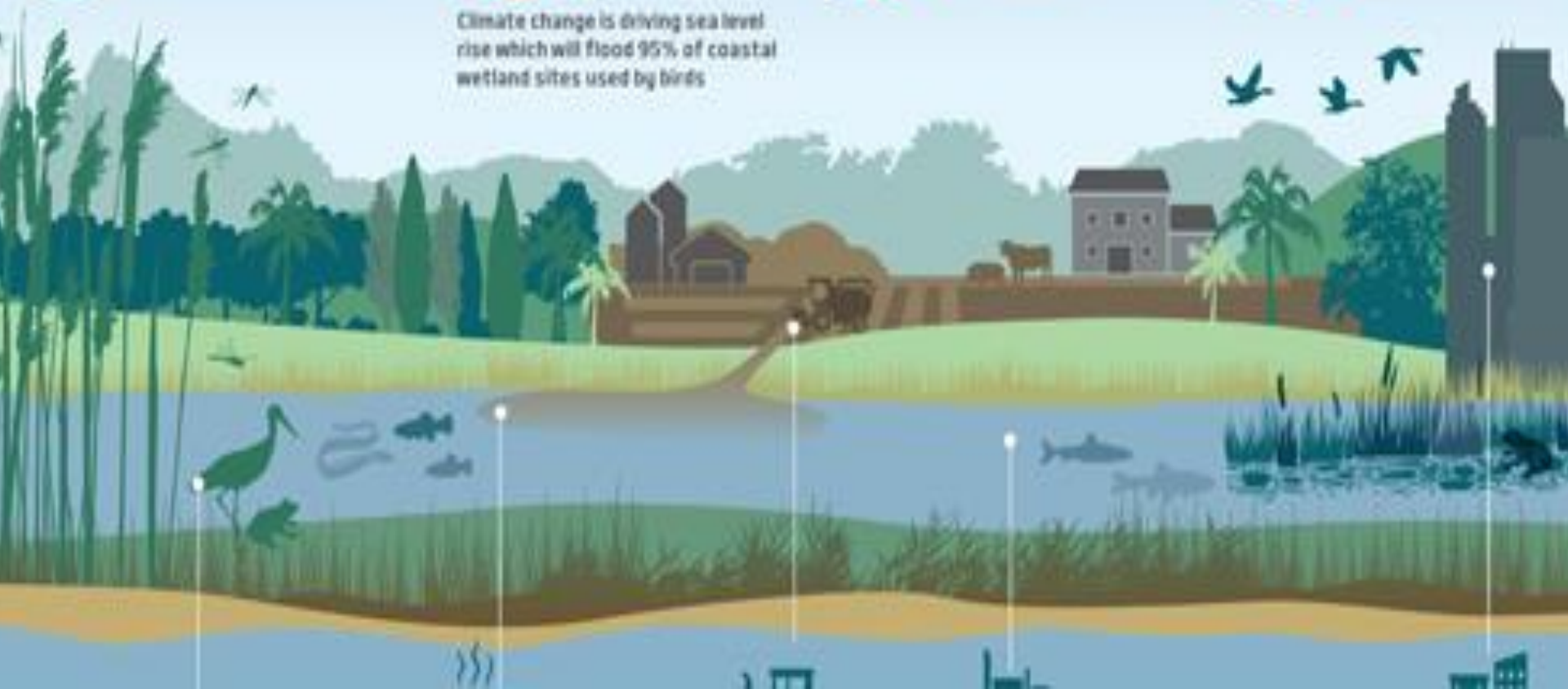
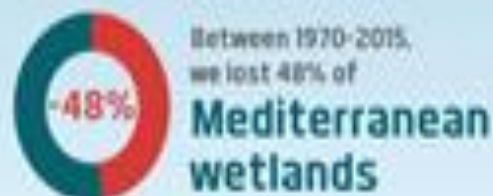
Wetland biodiversity in crisis



Healthy wetlands play an essential role as a habitat for biodiversity that can help to adapt to climate change. Mediterranean wetlands are a particularly important habitats for migratory birds. However, they are threatened by human pressures, thus reducing their capacity to preserve biodiversity. Find out more at offyourmap.org



Climate change is driving sea level rise which will flood 95% of coastal wetland sites used by birds



Wetland-Based Solutions

A collective effort to conserve and restore Mediterranean coastal wetlands for nature and people

www.wetlandbasedsolutions.org

Financially supported by MAVA

30 partners in 10 Med countries

Restore coastal wetlands and make it works as NBS to mitigate climate impacts in the region.

Encourage sustainable water use and reduce water abstraction.

Reduce threats to coastal wetlands and related marine habitats.

Create new socioeconomic opportunities based on coastal wetlands

Increase and share knowledge

Some actions:

Concrete wetlands restoration actions in Albania, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Italy, Malta, Montenegro, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey

Improved and shared the wetlands knowledge base and ensured it helps relevant authorities make informed decisions (comprehensive assessment of critical wetlands to be restored and/or recovered)

Ensured that wetland economic sectors (salt production, tourism, agriculture) operate more sustainably and create socio-economic opportunities to reduce loss and degradation

Developed national and regional policy and advocacy strategies for wetlands conservation and restoration.

WETLAND
BASED
SOLUTIONS

#LifeBeginsInWetlands

Wetlands as Nature-based solutions: policy context

International and regional policy frameworks:

- The Ramsar Convention (Mediterranean Contracting Parties)
- The Convention on Biological Diversity
- The UN Decade for the Restoration of Ecosystems
- The Paris Agreement on Climate Change
- The Sendai Framework for Disaster Reduction
- The EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and EU Green Deal
- The UfM 2030 GreenerMed Agenda
- The UfM Blue Economy Agenda
- The Barcelona Convention



We rely on the Network of Mediterranean Ramsar sites managers

425 Sites – 950.000 ha

France	10
Spain	14
Italy	32
Slovenia	1
Croatia	2
Bosnia & Herzegovina	1
Montenegro	2
Albania	3
Greece	7
Malta	2



6	Morocco
9	Algeria
17	Tunisia
2	Libya
2	Egypt
4	Turkey
1	Israel
3	Lebanon

www.medwetmanagers.net



A Ramsar Resolution on Mediterranean Wetlands for COP14

Main elements:

- The draft resolution urges Mediterranean Contracting Parties to introduce and adopt appropriate policies and measures to conserve, sustainably manage and restore wetlands as long term and most cost-effective NbS through promoting ecosystem-based and integrated sustainable water management of the whole connected watersheds while putting in place financial incentives to support the efforts of local stakeholders
- It also recommends them to support the MedWet Initiative to develop Mediterranean-wide knowledge base on the conservation status and the carbon fluxes of wetlands as a basis to assess progress and prioritize restoration actions
- To organize exchanges of good practices and lessons learnt from existing successful wetland restoration projects, wetlands restoration as NbS and capacity building for wetlands managers and other stakeholders



What to do next to reverse trend ?

1. Put wetlands and NbS at the top of political agendas, including in the EU legislations: EU biodiversity strategy and EU restoration law, EU strategy of adaptation to climate change, EU cooperation policy, Nature
2. Harmonize national, regional (Barcelona Convention, UfM, etc.) and international legal and policy arrangements to accelerate wetlands restoration work
3. Mobilize appropriate funding support to assist regional and national initiatives in the Med in favour of wetlands
4. Support the exchange of good practices, lessons learnt and knowledge through existing research programmes and networks, MedWet, The network of Wetland Managers (which is already operating in 120 sites over 1 million ha in the region, etc.
5. Fill in the knowledge gap on the conservation status of Mediterranean Wetland especially in the Southern and Eastern part of the Basin, to ensure it helps relevant authorities to make informed decisions
6. Support the development of integrated and decentralized planning and management schemes involving local stakeholders and creating socio-economic incentives
7. Increase the surface of protected wetlands by designing new Ramsar Sites and expanding the Natura 2000 network;
8. Ensure that wetland economic sectors (salt production, tourism and agriculture) operate more sustainably and create socio-economic opportunities which help bend the curve of loss and degradation by restoring the relationship between humans and nature for future generations.
9. Develop communication and awareness action to ensure engagement of relevant stakeholders at regional and site level.