

# THE MARINE NATURAL PARK OF THE GULF OF

## INFORMATION

The Marine Natural Park of the Gulf of Lion

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The [Marine Natural Park of the Gulf of Lion](#) is the number one marine natural park of the Mediterranean and the third for the whole of France. It was created in 2011 and represents a great opportunity for the whole of the Languedoc-Roussillon region. This Marine Natural Park is a treasure chest of exceptional natural wealth, a theatre for marine life, but also the outlet for human activity on dry land. It stretches across a surface area of 4,000 km<sup>2</sup> of marine area off the coast of the Pyrénées-Orientales and Aude, from Cerbère to Leucate.

Thanks to this park, the sheer wealth of the Mediterranean can be recorded, the area can be protected from ecological threats and we can develop all activities related to the sea. It helps to address issues related to the economy, culture and tourism, and also to increase awareness for the preservation and protection of the marine world. Thanks to its very own Parliament of the Sea, all local players involved with the sea are assembled and can make decisions on how the maritime area should best be managed.

## 8 management goals

1. Turn the Marine Natural Park into a benchmark for the knowledge and monitoring of the marine environment and its ecosystems, especially the deep canyons, continental plateau, coralligenous and sea grass beds, and all the social and economic activities involved.
2. Protect the marine natural heritage from the coastline to the deep canyons, by preserving the species and their habitats and encouraging ecosystems to function and interact correctly.
3. Preserve and improve the quality of the water at the Marine Natural Park by getting involved in managing the catchment areas and fighting against pollution, both on land and at sea.
4. Support and encourage sustainable development with regards maritime economic activities, such as professional fishing, companies in the nautical business and organisations involved in port management.
5. Encourage management of all natural resources in the Marine Natural Park, to ensure their continuation and longevity.
6. Encourage the development of nautical tourism activities that are compatible with protecting the marine natural heritage, and promote practices that ensure the protection of the marine environment.
7. Contribute to the protection and enhancement of the maritime cultural heritage, and develop local maritime culture that combines traditional and modern practices.
8. Consider a partnership with Spain, to adopt a common approach to protecting and managing the marine environment and for the sustainable development of maritime activities.

## MEDIA RELATIONS OFFICE

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## PYRÉNÉES MÉDITERRANÉE EN PAYS CATALAN

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## Identity card for the marine area 1

### FURTHER INFORMATION

Argelès-sur-Mer Tourist Office

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[www.argeles-sur-mer.com](http://www.argeles-sur-mer.com)

Pyrénées-Méditerranée Tourist Office

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Collioure Tourist Office for culture and events

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Banyuls-sur-Mer Tourist Office

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Cerbère Tourist Office

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[www.cerbere-tourisme.com](http://www.cerbere-tourisme.com)

Websites

[www.tourisme-pyreneesorientales.com/en](http://www.tourisme-pyreneesorientales.com/en)

### Geography:

- ✓ 4,000 km<sup>2</sup> of exclusively marine space.
- ✓ 100 km of coastline: 35 km rocky coast and 65 km sandy coast.
- ✓ Maximum depth: over 1,200 metres.
- ✓ 12 coastal towns: Leucate, Barcarès, Torreilles, Sainte-Marie-la-Mer, Canet-en-Roussillon, Saint-Cyprien, Elne, Argelès-sur-Mer, Collioure, Port-Vendres, Banyuls-sur-Mer, Cerbère.
- ✓ 3 coastal rivers: Agly (82 km long), Têt (120 km long) and Tech (85 km long).

### Exceptional biodiversity:

- ✓ 4 different habitats: open sea, rocky beds, sandy beds and surface.
- ✓ 1,200 animal species.
- ✓ 500 plant species.
- ✓ 5 remarkable habitats: lithophyllum rim, amphioxus on shell gravel, posidonia bed and cymodocea meadows, coralligenous, underwater canyons.
- ✓ Numerous protected or regulated marine species: dusky grouper, spiny sea urchin, loggerhead turtle, posidonia, pinna nobilis, slipper lobster, red coral, etc.
- ✓ More than 20 species of cetaceans: large dolphin, fin whale, etc.

### Recognised natural heritage:

- ✓ 4 sites classified as Natura 2000 sites (500 km<sup>2</sup>) are managed by the Park.
- ✓ Cerbère-Banyuls Natural Marine Reserve, the number one exclusively marine reserve in France, covering an area of 6.5 km<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ 11 sites acquired by the Conservatoire du Littoral (French Coastal Protection): Canet Lake, Mas Larrieu, Paullilles Bay, etc.

### Significant pressure from the tourism industry:

- ✓ 11 seaside resorts
- ✓ 2.5 million visitors per year along the Park's coastline. The summer accounts for half of this amount.
- ✓ 20,000 jobs created through tourism.

### Maritime heritage:

- ✓ 17 boats bearing the French BIP (Boat of heritage interest) label
- ✓ 1 'Notre-Dame-de-Consolation' vessel, classified a Historic Monument.
- ✓ 33 associations working to enhance the maritime heritage.
- ✓ 16 heritage buildings classified as Historic Monuments.

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## Identity card for the marine area ②

### *Ports:*

- ✓ 10 marinas including Saint-Cyprien, the 3rd biggest marina in Europe with 2,200 berths.
- ✓ 1 commercial port, 2nd biggest French fruit port on the Mediterranean.
- ✓ 7 fishing ports.

### *Professional fishing:*

- ✓ 82 boats
- ✓ 90% of the fleet are small-scale fishermen.
- ✓ 1 producers' organisation
- ✓ Around 300 direct jobs.

### *Sailing:*

- ✓ Close to 9,000 harbour rings for recreational boats.
- ✓ 20 open anchorage sites that are used on a regular basis.
- ✓ Over 70 sale/hire/repair companies for sailing boats, motor boats, other motor-powered vessels and ship's chandlers.
- ✓ 14 watersports areas, and an international event: the Mondial du Vent in Leucate.
- ✓ Shipbuilding: 8 workshops, including 3 shipyards.

### *Deep-sea diving:*

- ✓ 23 professional companies and around twenty associations.
- ✓ 50 diving spots, 7 of them very popular ones.
- ✓ More than 80,000 dives per year.

### *Recreational fishing:*

- ✓ 11 clubs, including 2 underwater fishing clubs and 4 big-game fishing clubs.
- ✓ More than 600 members.

### *Scientific research:*

- ✓ 2 local organisations: Banyuls Oceanological Observatory, Université de Perpignan.
- ✓ A dozen scientific organisations work in the marine environment around the park.

### *Swimming:*

- ✓ Activities for the vast majority of tourists coming to the coast (5 million per year).
- ✓ Swimming areas are spread along the 40 km of sandy coast and coves.
- ✓ 75,000 swimmers on the sandy coast and 4,000 on the rocky coast.

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