

Preliminary Critical Habitat Assessment

Value	Common Name	Habitat Association	Target value for KBA or Protected Area?	IBAT (Y/N)	Expected in Baseline (Y/N)	Confirmed in Baseline (Y/N)	Conservation Status		EOO (km2)	Range Restricted	AOO (km2)	EAAA (km2)	Criterion 1			Criterion 2		Criterion 3		Criterion 4		Criterion 5	Likelihood of CH	Comments
							Global	National					1.a.	1.b.	1.c.	2.a.	3.a.	3.b.	4.a.	4.b.				
Anthozoa																								
	<i>Cladocora caespitosa</i>	Marine	NA	Yes	Yes	No	EN	NA	1,995,685.679	No	1,792.000	270.000 (EBS)	Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	very High	<i>Cladocora caespitosa</i> is the only endemic zooxanthellate in the Mediterranean Sea. This coral species is a long lived coral species with the generation length estimated to be about 30 years (Casado-Amezúa et al., 2015) and can form banks at the present time (Morri et al., 1994). In the last 40 years, <i>Cladocora caespitosa</i> was observed several times in outer parts of the Gulf of Gabes (El Kateb et al. 2016) ( See Sheet 24). Some living corals are known to occur in the south-eastern of the Kerkennah Island and in the north-eastern part of Djerba Island (El Lakhraçh et al., 2012). Significant mortality of this species was observed off Haouaria in northeastern Tunisia in 2017 (Ghanem et al. 2019). Therefore, it is possible that this species could trigger Criterion 1. In accordance with the precautionary principle, this species could possibly qualify the EAAA as being located in Critical Habitat.
Insecta																								
	<i>Thorectes puncticollis</i>	Terrestrial	NA	Yes	Yes	No	EN	NA	80.000	Yes	NA	50	Yes	Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	very High	This species was described from museum collections (Baraud, J. 1965). It is rare in Tunisia (I. Labidi pers. obs. 2013). As with other <i>Thorectes</i> species, this species could have fragmented subpopulations because its flightless characteristic. Moreover, 80% of the known subpopulations are in coastal areas and suffer agriculture intensification and habitat modification. It is suspected that at least 50% of the subpopulations could remain in small and isolated areas, and are unlikely to be viable. The population is considered severely fragmented (Verdú et al., 2015) . This Coleoptera is classified as having a limited and fragmented range (See Sheet 23), with anywhere from 1 to 95 percent of the known global population potentially in the EAAA. Consequently, there is a possibility that this species may meet the criteria for both Criterion 1 and 2. In line with the precautionary principle, the presence of this species could potentially designate the Project area as Critical Habitat.
	<i>Pinna nobilis</i>	Fam Mussel	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes	EN	NA	1,819,158.439	Yes	1,336.000	270.000 (EBS)	Yes	Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	High	This species is endemic to the Mediterranean Sea, where it is distributed throughout the basin, occurring from the mediolittoral zone from the low tide level to approximately 60 m depth ( See sheet 25).The majority of populations have experienced a significant decline since the onset of a mass mortality event that began along the Spanish coasts in autumn 2016 (Vázquez-Luis et al., 2017). These events have rapidly spread eastward throughout the species' range (Carella et al., 2019; Katsanevakis et al., 2019). Mass mortalities have been reported in many populations in the eastern Mediterranean from 2018 to 2022, including Tunisia, Malta, Greece, Cyprus, and Turkey (IUCN, 2018; Labidi, 2023). Rabaoui et al. (2010) observed that prior to the initial mass mortality event, the average and maximum measured fan mussel densities in the eastern coast of Tunisia were 0.015 and 0.56 ind/m2. However, since the occurrence of mass mortality events, many of the populations used to calculate these density values have vanished (IUCN, 2019). Some living specimens have recently been observed by Labidi et al. (2023) in the Bizerte lagoon. Therefore, it is possible that this species could trigger Criterion 1. In accordance with the precautionary principle, this species could possibly qualify the EAAA as
Chondrichthyes																								

<i>Carcharias taurus</i>	Sand Tiger Shark	Marine	NA	No	No	Yes	CR	NA	255,408,789.792	NO	796.000	270.000 (EBS	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A	Very low	<p>The Sand Tiger Shark has a circumglobal distribution but is now rare in the Mediterranean, the last known record of the Sand Tiger Shark was of an individual captured in 2008 and with no records since, it is suspected that there are less than 250 mature individuals remaining in the Mediterranean and that the species is considered Critically Endangered and locally Possibly Extinct (Walls and Soldo 2016, Bargnesi et al. 2020). Its extent of range overlaps with the EAAA, but the total population is suspected to reductions of &gt;80% over the past three generation lengths (74 years) have decreased by over 80% in the last three generations. It is unlikely that the EAAA will support significant concentrations of this species (i.e. at least 0.5% of the global population and 5 reproductive units). Therefore, a judgement call was made to exclude the species from qualifying marine habitat as critical habitat in terms of criterion1 given that the qualifying thresholds are unlikely to be exceeded.</p>	
<i>Squatina squatina</i>	Angels shark	Marine	NA	No	Yes	No	CR	NA	228,488,490.809	NO	1,520.000	270.000 (EBS	Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A	Very low	<p>This species has been reported off the coasts of Tunisia and Algeria, although it was considered rare in the Gulf of Gabès (Bradai, 2000). Furthermore, fisheries statistics indicate that 180 tonnes of angel sharks (<i>Squatina</i> spp.) were reported landed by Tunisia in 2015, an increase from 125 tonnes in 2014. This species could be present in the EAAA. Therefore, it is possible that this species could trigger Criterion 1. In accordance with the precautionary principle, this species could possibly qualify the Project as being located in Critical Habitat.</p>
<i>Galeorhinus galeus</i>	Tope	Marine	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes	CR	NA	84,240,820.694	NO	2,816.000	270.000 (EBS	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A	Possible	<p>This species is widely distributed in the world but genetic and tagging data support the presence of north east and mediterranean population. Many observations indicate that tope has low frequency of occurrence in mediterranean sea (Ramírez-Amaro et al. 2020). This species is considered rare in the EAAA (Enajar et al., 2022). It cannot be ruled out, that <math>\geq 0.5\%</math> of the global population and <math>\geq 5</math> reproductive units occur within the EAAA, thus qualifying for Criterion 1.</p>
<i>Aetomylaeus bovinus</i>	Duckbill Eagle	Marine	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes	CR	NA	51,718,693.133	No	776.000	270000 (EBS	Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	<p>This species occurs throughout shallow, coastal and offshore waters of the Mediterranean Sea (Ebert and Stehmann 2013). Outside the Mediterranean Sea the range of the species extends in the eastern Atlantic Ocean from northwestern Spain to the Indian Ocean. This species is reported as very common in the gulf of Gabès (Enajar et al., 2022). It is likely that the area supports globally important concentration <math>\geq 0.5\%</math> of the global population and <math>\geq 5</math> reproductive units</p>
<i>Leucoraja melitensis</i>	Maltese Skate	Marine	NA	No	No	No	CR	NA	461,611.210	Yes	28.000	25.000 (EBS	Yes	NA	NA	Yes	NA	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A	Very low	<p>The species is endemic to the Mediterranean. Its range now appears to be restricted to the Sicilian Channel between Malta and Tunisia (GFCM 2012). The depth range is 60-800 m, but it is most commonly found between 400-800 m. This species is considered rare off Malta and Tunisia (Mourad et al., 2018). The threshold for triggering Critical Habitat for this species is uncertain since the population has not been estimated in this area. Given that limited information available on the presence and extent of this species, this species is considered as restricted-range as anywhere from 1 - 95 percent of the (known) global population could be present in the EAAA. It is therefore possible that this species could trigger Criterion 1 and 2. In accordance with the precautionary principle, this species could possibly qualify the Project as being located in Critical Habitat.</p>

<i>Squatina aculeata</i>	Sawback Angelshark	Marine	NA	Yes	Yes	No	CR	NA	17,126,696.351	NO	372.000	270.000 (EBS Yes)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Possible	<p>Ragonese et al. (2013) reported a single capture close to the Gulf of Gabès in 2000 during a GRUND survey covering the area between Sicily, Malta, and Tunisia. Bradaï et al. (2006) assessed the Sawback Angelshark as regularly observed in the Gulf of Gabès (Tunisia), according to Capapé et al. (2005) who reported the capture of 27 specimens between 1970 and 2002. This species could be present in the EAAA. It is therefore possible that this species could trigger Criterion 1. In accordance with the precautionary principle, this species could possibly qualify the Project as being located in Critical Habitat.</p>
<i>Squatina oculata</i>	Smoothback Angelshark	Marine	NA	Yes	Yes	No	CR	NA	19,936,610.309	NO	532.000	270.000 (EBS Yes)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Possible	<p>The species was a common ambush predator over large areas of its coastal and outer continental shelf soft sediment habitat at depths of 10 to 500 m in the Mediterranean Sea and Eastern Atlantic in the central Mediterranean, Ragonese et al. (2013) reported the capture of three Smoothback Angelsharks in 1997, 1998, and 2006 from 2,311 hauls conducted between Sicily, Malta, and Tunisia in the 1994-2009 period. This species is also reported reported for the Tunisian Gulf of Gabès coast (Quignard and Othman 1978). Capapé et al. (1990) recorded 108 specimens and 60 young-of-the-year in Tunisian waters (period not specified), suggesting the shallow waters of the Gulf of Tunis could be a parturition and nursery area. Bradaï et al. (2006) considered Smoothback Angelsharks to be regularly observed in the Gulf of Gabès, and the species was confirmed off the Libyan coast (Lamboeuf et al. 1995). This species could be present in the EAAA. It is therefore possible that this species could trigger Criterion 1. In accordance with the precautionary principle, this species could possibly qualify the Project as being located in Critical Habitat.</p>
<i>Rhinobatos rhinobatos</i>	Common guitarfish	Marine	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes	CR	NA	18,234,524.715	No	648.000	270.000 (EBS Yes)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	High	<p>The Common Guitarfish is demersal across sandy, muddy, and shelly habitats, and occurs inshore on the continental shelf to a depth of 180 m (Ebert and Stehmann 2013). It is found in the eastern Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea and occurs from the southern Bay of Biscay to Angola (Last et al. 2016). It is suspected that the Common Guitarfish has undergone a population reduction of &gt;80% over the last three generation lengths (42 years) based on abundance data and actual levels of exploitation and it is assessed as Critically Endangered. Observations from the 1980s indicate that the Common Guitarfish was prevalent within North African coast and eastern basin of Mediterranean (Quignard and Capapé 1971, Whitehead et al. 1984, Echwikhi et al. 2012, Echwikhi et al. 2013). This species is still caught in the Gulf of Gabès (Bradaï, 2001) and has been targeted by artisanal fishers for decades, landings indicate declines in abundance with catches containing a large proportion of immature individuals (Enajjar, 2008). After concertation with local expert (Samira Enajjar, INSTM Sfax) it is likely that the EAAA will support significant concentrations of this species (i.e. at least 0.5% of the global population and 5 reproductive units).</p>
<i>Glaucoctegus cemiculus</i>	Blackchin guitarfish	Marine	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes	CR	NA	20,778,805.696	No	784.000	270.000 (EBS Yes)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	very High	<p>The Blackchin Guitarfish is widely distributed in the eastern Atlantic Ocean from the northern coast of Portugal to Angola, including the Mediterranean Sea (where it appears to be more prevalent in the southern and eastern regions) (Capapé 1989, Last et al. 2016). The Gulf of Gabès, and areas of the eastern Mediterranean seem to be a core parts of the species' distribution, the species is still present and in some areas still commonly caught (e.g., Echwikhi et al. 2014, Soldo et al. 2014, Lteif 2015, Newell 2016). It is likely that the EAAA will support significant concentrations of this species (i.e. at least 0.5% of the global population and 5 reproductive units).</p>

<i>Myliobatis aquila</i>	Common Eagle ray	Marine	NA	Yes	Yes	No	CR	NA	32,383,902.381	No	1,204.000	270.000	(EBS Yes)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Possible	<p>In the Mediterranean Sea, the Common Eagle Ray is sometimes landed in fisheries as bycatch, particularly in the northern Mediterranean Sea (Gurbet et al. 2013). Formerly very abundant in the Gulf of Tunis and Gabès (Capapé, 1976) This species is now reported as rare in the all the tunisian coast (Enajjar et al., 2022). Observations conducted by Enajjar Samira (Rays specialist) show that this species has been observed an average of fifty times per year in the Gulf of Gabès (Personal communication). It can be assumed that <math>\geq 0.5\%</math> of the global population and <math>\geq 5</math> reproductive units occur within the EAAA .It is therefore possible that this species could trigger Criterion 1.</p>
<i>Carcharhinus plumbeus</i>	Sandbar Shark	Marrine	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes	EN	NA	247,380,198.551	NO	1,580.000	270.000	(EBS Yes)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Very High	<p><i>Carcharhinus plumbeus</i> is widely distributed and undertakes large migrations (Ebert et al. 2013). Records of sandbar sharks are reported throughout the Mediterranean (CAPAPÉ, 1989), but the species seems to be more abundant in the Adriatic Sea, the Levantine Basin and off the Maghrebin shore (BRADAI et al.,2004). In the Gulf of Gabès, landings of sandbar sharks occurred year round, especially from March to October (Saidi et al., 2005). However, the Gulf of Gabès is probably a nursery area for this species. The population size of this species is unknown but can be assumed that <math>\geq 0.5\%</math> of the global population and <math>\geq 5</math> reproductive units occur within the EAAA .It is therefore possible that this species could trigger Criterion 1.</p>
<i>Cetorhinus maximus</i>	Basking shark	Marine	NA	No	No	NO	EN	NA	96,359,747.054	NO	2,052.000	270.000	(EBS NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Very low	<p>The basking shark is a migratory and widely distributed in all the ocean but never being an abundant species. It is a coastal-pelagic shark found from boreal to warm temperate waters of all seas including Mediterranean Sea (Campagno, 1984).There are no data on the absolute global population size, although it is likely to be greater than 20,000 individuals (IUCN, 2023). Fifteen basking sharkshave been reorded in Tunisian coasts since 1964. The last specimen observed was a male caught accidentally in Cap Negro in Northern Tunisia on 21 may 2019 (Enajjar et al, 2019). Given the relatively small record of this species , it is unlikely that the EAAA will qualify as Critical Habitat for this species.</p>
<i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i>	Shortfin Mako	Marine	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes	EN	NA	69,308,302.336	No	2,048.000	270.000	(EBS Yes)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Possible	<p>There are no data available on the absolute global population size of the Shortfin Mako. In mediterranean sea an estimated decline of 99.9% in abundance and biomass since the early 19th century was reported (Ferreti et al. 2008). This species is cited as common in the tunisian coast (Enajjar et al., 2022). This species could be present in the EAAA. It is therefore possible that this species could trigger Criterion 1. In accordance with the precautionary principle, this species could possibly qualify the Project as being located in Critical Habitat.</p>
<i>Mustelus mustelus</i>	Common smoothhound	Marine	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes	EN	NA	42,102,299.913	No	1,712.000	270.000	(EBS Yes)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Very High	<p>Even though there is confusion between the two species, <i>Mustelus mustelus</i> and <i>Mustelus punctulatus</i> , this small shark seems to be more abundant in the Gulf of Gabès compared to other Mediterranean regions (western, central, and eastern) (Echwikhi et al., 2013). A fishery-independent survey conducted between 2007 and 2008 in this area caught a mean of 2.2 individuals per kilometer of gillnet per day (Echwikhi et al., 2013). In recent decades, a continuous decrease in smoothhounds across the Mediterranean, combined with a contraction in their spatial distribution, has been reported (Colloca et al., 2017). Specifically, it was estimated that the Common Smoothhound and Blackspotted Smoothhound have declined by 88% in the western Mediterranean and Adriatic Sea since the 1920s (Colloca et al., 2017). It can therefore be assumed that <math>\geq 0.5\%</math> of the global population and <math>\geq 5</math> reproductive units occur within the EAAA, thus qualifying for Criterion 1.</p>

Species	Common Name	Environment	NA	Yes	No	No	EN	NA	39,848,351.824	No	1,032.000	270.000 (EBS NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Very low	
<i>Rostroraja alba</i>	White skate	Marine	NA	Yes	No	No	EN	NA	39,848,351.824	No	1,032.000	270.000 (EBS NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Very low	The overall geographical range of <i>Rostroraja alba</i> covers the Eastern Atlantic coasts, including the Mediterranean Sea, and extends into the southwestern parts of the Indian Ocean. Little information is available on the population size of the white skate. However, available data indicate that this species has undergone a reduction in abundance and is now considered rare in the Northeast Atlantic and the Mediterranean. This species was regularly captured by fisheries in Tunisian waters and was common in all Tunisian coastal waters, but captures were more frequent in the northern part of the Tunisian coast (Capapé 1976). Captures in the Gulf of Gabès seem to be correlated with water depths greater than 100 meters (Kadri et al., 2014). Given the ray's habitat preference and very large range, it is highly unlikely that the limited and shallow waters of the gulf of Gabès would support , , numbers sufficient to meet the 0.5% threshold
<i>Oxynotus centrina</i>	Angular Roughshark	Marine	NA	Yes	No	No	EN	NA	30,016,465.515	No	524.000	270.000 (EBS NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Very low	The Angular Roughshark is found in the Northeast and Eastern Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea (Ebert et al., 2013). Records along the Tunisian coast are sporadic and temporally distant. The species has been reported off the northern coast (Capapé, 1989) and southward in the Gulf of Gabès (Bradai et al., 2002). The last captures of two specimens of <i>O. centrina</i> occurred in 2019 (Capapé et al., 2021). It is unlikely that the EAAA will support significant concentrations of this species (i.e., at least 0.5% of the global population and 5 reproductive units). Therefore, a judgment call was made to exclude the species from qualifying marine habitat as critical habitat in terms of criterion 1, given that the qualifying thresholds are unlikely to be exceeded.
<i>Gymnura altavela</i>	Spiny Butterfly Ray	Marine	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes	En	NA	56,923,289.853	No	2,872.000	270.000 (EBS Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	High	The spiny butterfly ray, <i>Gymnura altavela</i> , has a global range spanning four broad ocean regions: the Mediterranean and Black Sea, Eastern Central and Southeast Atlantic, Northwest and Western Central Atlantic, and Southwest Atlantic (IUCN, 2021). This species is commonly found in the Gulf of Gabès (Enajjar et al., 2022) and inhabits shallow coastal waters, including intertidal zones, on sandy and muddy substrates down to depths of 150 meters, but typically at depths of less than 50 meters (Last et al., 2016). Recent genetic analysis supports the existence of two genetically distinct lineages of <i>G. altavela</i> (West and East Atlantic), suggesting the need for further investigation to determine if these lineages represent cryptic species within this endangered ray genus (Vilasboa et al., 2022). Therefore, it is possible that this species could trigger Criterion 1. In accordance with the precautionary principle, this species could possibly qualify the EAAA as being located in Critical Habitat.
<i>Raja radula</i>	Rough Skate	Marine	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes	En	NA	2,170,843.422	No	408.000	270.000 (EBS Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	High	The Rough Skate occurs throughout the Mediterranean Sea, but mainly in the western region and around the Balearic Islands (Serena 2005) (See sheet 18). This skate is found in coastal waters to depths of ~350 m (Stehmann and Bürkel 1984, Serena 2005). Off the Tunisian coasts, <i>R. radula</i> is frequently captured as a by-catch of demersal trawls throughout the year in shallow coastal waters (Kadri et al., 2013). In the Gulf of Gabes landings occurs throughout the year, especially during spring. According to it's geographical range, it is likely that the EAAA will support significant concentrations of this species (i.e. at least 0.5% of the global population and 5 reproductive units)



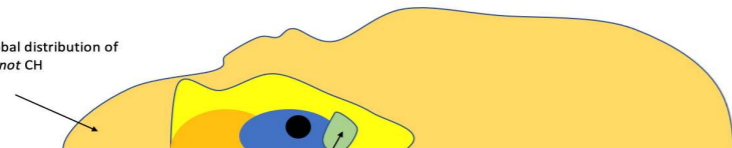
<i>Anguilla anguilla</i>	European Eel	Marine /freshwater	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes	CR	NA	8,442,677.912	Yes	680.000	270.000 (EBS	Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A	Very high	In northern Africa, <i>Anguilla anguilla</i> is a non-breeding visitor found along the coast, especially in estuarine habitats and lagoons (See Sheet 26). The decline in eel fishery catches is evident. In Tunisia, over the past two decades, production has decreased from 300 tonnes in 1989 to less than 100 tonnes in 2005 (DGPA). The reasons for this decline are manifold: over-exploitation, river management practices, water pollution, and infestation by hematophagous parasites. Unfortunately, there have been no studies conducted in Tunisia regarding the status of eel stocks or their biomass estimation (Derouiche et al., 2016). Given the substantial decline in catches since 1980, it is suspected that the population will decrease by more than 50% between 1980 and 2025 if immediate and effective conservation measures are not implemented (Azeroual, 2010). Therefore, it is possible that this species could trigger Criterion 1. In accordance with the precautionary principle, this species could possibly qualify the EAAA as being located in Critical Habitat.
<b>Reptilia</b>																							
<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	Green Turtle	Marine/Terrestrial	NA	Yes	No	No	EN	NA	118,120,666.598	Yes	2,828.000	270.000 (EBS	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A	Very low	The green turtle has a circumglobal distribution, occurring throughout tropical and, to a lesser extent, subtropical waters, including the Mediterranean Sea (See Sheet 27). This species is highly migratory, undertaking complex movements and migrations through geographically disparate habitats. After spending a number of years in the oceanic zone, these turtles recruit to neritic developmental areas rich in seagrass and/or marine algae where they forage and grow until reaching maturity (Musick and Limpus, 1997). Nesting occurs in more than 80 countries worldwide (Hirth, 1997), with regular nesting observed in the Mediterranean. At the beginning of the 20th century, Blanc (1935) reported that green turtles were sold in fish markets in Tunisia and considered the species common along the southern coast. Laurent et al. (1990) mentioned its presence in Tunisian waters, but the species was regarded as rare (Bradai et al., 2008). From 2004 to 2015, a total of 14 green turtles (6 stranded and 8 incidentally captured) were recorded in the Gulf of Gabès. Green turtles are primarily caught by shallow water bottom trawling, especially in seagrass areas (Karaa et al., 2016). Recently, a green turtle nesting site was identified on Rejich beach in Mahdia (Ismail et al., 2022).
<b>Aves</b>																							
<i>Numenius tenuirostris</i>	Slender billed Curlew	Terrestrial/Marine/Freshwater	NA	Yes	No	No	CR	NA	303000	Yes	NA	270.000 (EBS	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A	Very low	The population is assumed to be tiny (fewer than 50 individuals and mature individuals) based on the lack of recent records (Azafaf et al., 2007). There are no recent confirmed sightings of this species within Europe, where it formerly regularly wintered. At the European level, it is classified as Critically Endangered (Possibly Extinct) (BirdLife International 2015). Since 1970 to 1984, there have been nine records of Slender-billed Curlew from Tunisia (Wymenga & van Dijk, 1985). It must be accepted now that this small curlew can be considered on the verge of extinction (Isenman et al., 2005). Special survey for this species in 1994, 1997 and 2003 failed to produce any record (Azafaf et al., 2007). Given this information, it is unlikely that the EAAA will qualify as Critical Habitat for this species.
<i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>	Balearic shearwater	Terrestrial/Marine/Freshwater	NA	Yes	No	No	CR	NA	7120000	Yes	9	270.000 (EBS	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A	Very low	<i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i> breeds almost exclusively in the Balearic Islands. However, some birds also utilize foraging grounds at the extremities of their distribution, including the continental shelf off Algeria and Morocco, as well as in the Gulf of Lion (Afán, 2016). While there have been observations attributed to this species in Tunisia at Hammamet, Cap Serat, Zarzis, and Nabeul (Isenmann et al., 2005), <i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i> remains extremely rare in Tunisia (Chokri M. A., personal communication) and would have an extremely low probability of meeting the 0.5% threshold.



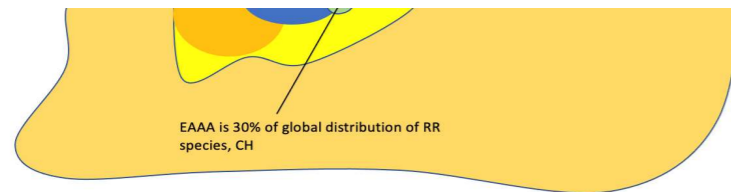
<i>Curruca sarda</i>	Marmora's warbler	Terrestrial	NA	Yes	No	No	LC	NA	132000	Yes	NA	270 000 (EBS NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Very low	The Marmora's Warbler is a Mediterranean endemic species with an insular distribution, inhabiting Sardinia, Corsica, the Balearic Islands excluding Menorca, and some smaller islands along Western Italy in the Tyrrhenian Sea. In 2000, the population was estimated to number between 15,000 and 50,000 breeding pairs (Aymi and Gargallo, 2015). Breeding on Tunisian islands appears to be doubtful according to Guatier T. (in Isenman et al., 2005). As elsewhere in continental North Africa, this species is regularly observed in small numbers in Tunisia, from October to April in mountainous areas, along the coast, or in desert regions (Isenman et al., 2005). It is unlikely that this species will trigger Criterion 2 for restricted range species. worldwide population size is placed in the
<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	Kentish Plover	Marine /Terrestrial	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	LC	NA	NA	No	NA	16,2 (IBA Seb Yes)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	High	
<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	Grey Plover	Marine /Terrestrial	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	LC	NA	2910000	No	NA	16,2 (IBA Seb Yes)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Possible	This species is listed as Least Concern (LC) on the IUCN Red List, with a population estimate in the Important Bird Area (IBA) ranging between 1500 and 2000 individuals (BirdLife International, 2001). However, this estimate falls short of meeting the criteria for congregating in groups of ≥1% of the global population, which is estimated to be between 490,000 and 630,000 individuals. Nonetheless, wintering numbers can be estimated at several thousand birds in the Gulf of Gabès (Isenman et al., 2005). Therefore, it is conceivable that this species could satisfy Criterion 1. Following the precautionary principle, it is plausible that this species could potentially qualify the EAAA as being located in Critical Habitat.
<b>Mammalia</b>																							
<i>Delphinus delphis</i>	Commun Dolphin	Marine	NA	Yes	No	No	EN (Mediterranean)	NA	NA	NA	NA	270 000 (EBS NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Very low	of divergence between Mediterranean and Atlantic populations of the Common Dolphin (Natoli et al., 2008). However, there has been relatively little survey coverage of waters along the North African coast. Sightings and stranding data indicate a regular presence of Common Dolphins in the Aegean Sea (Frantzis et al., 2002); otherwise, these dolphins are rare (Bearzi et al., 2003). There is no basin-wide estimate of abundance for Common Dolphins in the Mediterranean Sea. Vella (Bearzi et al., 2021) combined data from ship and aerial surveys conducted between 1997–2002 and obtained a density estimate of 0.135 dolphins per km <sup>2</sup> .  During surveys carried out in Tunisian waters in May 2003 and May 2005, <i>Delphinus delphis</i> were observed in the northern area at depths ranging from 200 to 1000 m (Ben Naceur et al., 2005). Some observations were also mentioned in northern Tunisia (Ben Massouad et al., 2017). This species rarely strands on Tunisian coasts. Only two stranding events were documented. The first event was an alive adult stranded on La Goulette beach (Northern Tunisia) in 1971. The second stranding occurred in 2005 along the central Tunisian coast at Mahdia (Karaa et
<b>Plantae</b>																							
<i>Posidonia oceanica</i>	Neptune Grass	Marine	NA	No	Yes	Yes	LC	NA	3000000	Yes	12300	25000 (EBSA NA)	NA	NA	Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Very High	The area of <i>P. oceanica</i> seagrass meadows was estimated in Tunisia to be 6,369 km <sup>2</sup> , representing 33.5% of the area of occupancy (Traganos et al., 2022). The largest meadows are located in the Gulf of Gabès, which regularly holds at least 10% of the global population size. This species could trigger Criteria 2.

### Critical Habitat Assessment Test Criteria Against GN6 Thresholds

EAAA is <0.5% of global distribution of globally EN species, not CH



Critical Habitat Criterion	Threshold(s)
1. Critically Endangered (CR) and/or Endangered (EN) species	(a) Areas that support globally important concentrations of an IUCN Red-listed EN or CR species (≥ 0.5% of the global population AND ≥ 5 reproductive units GN16 of a CR or EN species).  (b) Areas that support globally important concentrations of an IUCN Red-listed Vulnerable (VU) species, the loss of which would result in the change of the IUCN Red List status to EN or CR and meet the thresholds in GN72(a).  (c) As appropriate, areas containing important concentrations of a nationally or regionally listed EN or CR species.
2. Restricted-range species	(a) Areas that regularly hold ≥10% of the global population size AND ≥10 reproductive units of a species.



3. Migratory or congregatory species	<p>(a) Areas known to sustain, on a cyclical or otherwise regular basis, <math>\geq 1</math> percent of the global population of a migratory or congregatory species at any point of the species' lifecycle.</p> <p>(b) Areas that predictably support <math>\geq 10</math> percent of the global population of a species during periods of environmental stress.</p>
4. Highly threatened and/or unique ecosystems	<p>(a) Areas representing <math>\geq 5\%</math> of the global extent of an ecosystem type meeting the criteria for IUCN status of CR or EN.</p> <p>(b) Other areas not yet assessed by IUCN but determined to be of high priority for conservation by regional or national systematic conservation planning.</p>
5. Key evolutionary processes	As identified by experts.