After-LIFE Plan

LIFE MEDTURTLES | LIFE18 NAT/IT/000103

This Deliverable shows how the LIFE MEDTURTLES partnership will continue disseminating and communicating the results of the project after its end, and in particular: a) how the results will be continued and b) how a wider application will be facilitated / encouraged / ensured by others relevant stakeholders.

Name of Deliverable After-LIFE Plan

Dissemination level Public

Type of deliverable Report

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After-LIFE Plan

LIFE MEDTURTLES | LIFE18 NAT/IT/000103

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Collective actions for improving the conservation status of the EU sea turtle populations: bordering areas.

Countries
Italy, Spain, Albania, Tunisia, Turkey

Project Start
01/09/2019

Project End
31/08/2024

Coordinating Beneficiary
Department of Biology
Università di Pisa
(UNIPI) Italy

Associated Beneficiaries
Faculté des Sciences de Sfax
(FSS) Tunisia

Fondazione Cetacea
(FC) Italy

Herpetofauna Albanian Society
(HAS) Albania

Pamukkale Bilim Merkezi Derneği
(PSCA) Turkey

Universitat de València
(UVEG) Spain

List of acronyms

UAVs Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

UNIPI Università di Pisa

UVEG Universitat de València

FSS Faculté des Sciences de Sfax

FC Fondazione Cetacea

HAS Herpetofauna Albanian Society

PSCA Pamukkale Bilim Merkezi Derneği

FADs Fish Aggregating Devices

DEKAMER Sea Turtle Research, Rescue and Rehabilitation Center established in 2009 in Dalyan, Mugla-Turkey

USFWS US Fish and Wildlife Service

TED Turtle Excluder Device

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Impact and Outcomes

Impact i.e. long-term achievable outcomes of LIFE MEDTURTLES		Outcomes i.e. short-term measurable actions that will allow to reach the desired impact
	1. AFTER-LIFE Communication Plan	The After-LIFE Communication Plan will start in November 2024, and it's expected to reach a wide range of local and EU target groups interested in the results of LIFE MEDTURTLES in all EU and the replication of its solutions.
	2. Mitigation of threats in areas with scattered nesting	**Albania** Cooperation with local communities and the National Agency of Protected Areas **Spain** Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with other projects and institutions in the Valencian Community and other regions.
	3. Reduction of **mortality** of turtles caught in fishing gears	**Albania** Sustaining long-term collaboration with fishing communities established during the project. **Italy** Maintaining direct communication with fishers to ensure continuous training and cooperation with the Riccione rescue centre, while also exploring potential future research activities and investigating post-release mortality and other bycatch issues. **Spain:** Coordinating the cetacean and sea turtle stranding network within the Valencian Community, which includes recording sea turtle bycatch and analysing interactions between sea turtles and various fisheries in the region. **Tunisia** Fostering a strong connection with fishers and national coastguards, who will continue to report bycatch incidents and assist with distressed turtles. **Turkey** Continuing collaboration with fishers, supported by the establishment of a robust network.

	4. Marine hot-spot areas for sea turtles: dynamic fishery management	**Albania** Provision of hotspot information to fishermen and other stakeholders to facilitate dynamic fishery management. **Italy** Enhancement and continuation of information sharing through the collection of reports from recreational boaters, fishermen, citizens, and tourists to ensure that the database continuous update and effective sharing of data. **Spain** actively monitoring of loggerhead sea turtles that have been satellite-tagged and are still transmitting at sea. Collaboration with institutions such as the Polytechnic University of Valencia to tag and monitor additional turtles in the region, including nesting females. This initiative has led to the development of new distribution maps. **Tunisia** use of dataset extracted from the mobile App to update and improve hotspot maps on an annual basis, while also expanding the scope to cover the entire Tunisian coast. Additional satellite tracking of turtles. **Turkey**, continuation of satellite tracking, supported by other funding sources, alongside ongoing drone surveys and Capture, Mark, and Recapture studies to determine sea turtle densities and their habitats. Monitoring activities with drones.
	5. Fishing gear modification for reducing turtle bycatch	**Albania** advocacy activities directed at government agencies to promote the subsidization of modified fishing gear, including Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) and LED lights to encourage more fishermen to adopt, implement, and consistently utilize turtle-safe equipment. **Italy** promotion of TED devices by implementing continuous training initiatives and encouraging governmental administrations to allocate funding aimed at transforming fishing practices towards greater sustainability. Involvement of legal and economic facilitators to support these changes. **Spain** trials aimed at evaluating modifications in fishing gear to reduce sea turtle bycatch. has signed

		a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Chelonia Association to continue performing onboard TED demonstrations within the bottom trawling fleet of the Valencian Community. **Tunisia** investigation of the effects of set-net modifications and the use of circle hooks for longlines by increasing the number of experiments across different seasons and extending them to other coastal areas of Tunisia. **Turkey**, collaboration with fishers and a small grant from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and other international projects will allow the continuation of bycatch reduction activities.
	6. Rescue centres and networks: increasing sea turtle rehabilitation capacity	**Albania** continuation of sea turtle rescue operations, supported by the rescue centre established by the project. **Italy** implementation of the available technologies and making full use of the equipment acquired through the project for the rescue centre. **Tunisia** continued operation of the newly established rescue centre in Sfax. The centre's capacity will be increased and upgraded, aiming to rescue at least 100 turtles per year, which will include acquiring additional treatment and diagnostic equipment. **Turkey** DEKAMER and four other first aid centres will be supported, all of which are cooperating to enhance sea turtle rescue efforts.
	7. Reducing the **impact** of ghost gear in turtles	**Albania** advocacy activities directed at government agencies to promote the subsidization of modified fishing gear, including Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) and LED lights to encourage more fishermen to adopt, implement, and consistently utilize turtle-safe equipment. **Italy** promotion of TED devices by implementing continuous training initiatives and encouraging governmental administrations to allocate funding aimed at transforming fishing practices towards

		greater sustainability. Involvement of legal and economic facilitators to support these changes. **Spain** trials aimed at evaluating modifications in fishing gear to reduce sea turtle bycatch. has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Chelonia Association to continue performing onboard TED demonstrations within the bottom trawling fleet of the Valencian Community. **Tunisia** investigation of the effects of set-net modifications and the use of circle hooks for longlines by increasing the number of experiments across different seasons and extending them to other coastal areas of Tunisia. **Turkey** collaboration with fishers and a small grant from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and other international projects will allow the continuation of bycatch reduction activities.

1. AFTER-LIFE Communication Plan

The After-LIFE Communication Plan will start in November 2024, and it's expected to reach a wide range of local and EU target groups interested in the results of LIFE MEDTURTLES and the replication of its solutions.

At least the following outputs will be produced:

- 1 attendance as speaker in an international conference.
- 4 attendances as speaker in national conferences.
- 1 conference organized in synergy with the LIFE OASIS dissemination activities.
- 1 demonstration day
- 1 scientific paper published in Conference Acts.
- 2 scientific papers published in specialized magazines (in English and Italian).

LIFE MEDTURTLES website will be maintained, updated and monitored for at least 5 years after the end of the project.

Country	Timing and activity	Cost categories	Yearly cost
All Countries	Until 5 years after the end of the Project	**Personnel** 1.000,00 per year covered by FC.	1.000,00
TOTAL			**5.000,00 EUR**

2. Mitigation of threats in areas with scattered nesting

Protecting scattered sea turtle clutches presents a challenge, beginning with their detection. The LIFE MEDTURTLES project has **enhanced the capacity for detecting and protecting sea turtle clutches** in Albania — where UAVs have been used to identify sea turtle tracks— and in Spain.

In **Albania**, **cooperation** with local communities and the National Agency of Protected Areas **will be strengthened to support further monitoring and protection efforts**. Educational programs in schools and local communities will continue to raise sustained and amplified awareness of the importance of sea turtle nesting. Additionally, the youth volunteers' branch of HAS will contribute to awareness campaigns and volunteer monitoring efforts.

In **Spain**, the UVEG team will **continue coordinating conservation actions** for sea turtle nesting events in the coming years, actively participating in the detection and protection of nests. The UVEG team has signed **Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs)** with **other projects** (including LIFE TURTLENEST, InGeNi-Caretta, and VARACOMVAL) and institutions in the **Valencian Community** and other regions. These partnerships aim to share data, samples, and protocols

to continue protecting and studying the nesting activity and nests of these species in the Spanish Mediterranean.

Country	Timing and activity	Cost categories	Yearly cost
Spain	1 year (with *in situ* activities in the following months): • **May**: protocol dissemination • **June-October**: Beach monitoring, nest location, clutch relocation and coordination of protection	**Personnel** 3 person Months UVEG staff - 3.000,00 **Travel** car and subsistence - 2.500,00 covered by InGeNi-Caretta and VARACOMVAL projects **Consumables** 500,00 covered by VARACOMVAL project	6.000,00
Albania	9 months a year, for the next 5 years • June-August 3 months drone monitoring • 6-month education	**Personnel** Wage of drone expert: 600,00/month → 1.800,00/year Wage of staff for educational campaign: 500,00/month → 3.000,00/year Total Personnel 4.800,00/year **Travel** Travel costs: 350,00/month → 2.100,00/year **Consumables** Educational material (leaflets, posters): 900,00/year Refreshments and miscellaneous costs: 8.700,00	43.500,00
TOTAL			**49.500,00 EUR**

3. Reduction of mortality of turtles caught in fishing gears

The LIFE MEDTURTLES project has informed many fishers of five countries on the mortality that sea turtles may suffer after being released in seemingly good condition and on the simple best practices they can adopt onboard to reduce this mortality.

In **Albania**, the long-term collaboration with fishing communities, established during the project, will be leveraged by HAS to **expand these activities along the Albanian coast**, aiming to increase the impact on reducing the mortality of turtles caught in fishing gear.

In **Italy**, FC will continue to **maintain direct contact with fishers, ensuring the ongoing provision of training and cooperation with the Rescue Centre**, as well as exploring potential future research activities. FC plans to organize regular, annual meetings with fishers to reinforce collaboration and maintain open lines of communication. These meetings will serve as a platform to update fishers on current initiatives, share insights on future perspectives, and discuss new developments related to the recovery centre and conservation efforts. By fostering consistent dialogue, FC aims to keep fishers fully informed and engaged, enabling them to contribute valuable input and remain active participants in shaping the direction of future initiatives. This structured approach will help build a stronger partnership, ensuring that both FC and the fishers are aligned in their shared goals of sustainability and conservation. UNIPI plans to continue investigating post-release mortality and other bycatch issues. In collaboration with fishers, UNIPI will persist in promoting onboard best practices to minimize mortality.

In **Spain**, the **UVEG** team **coordinates the cetacean and sea turtle stranding network** of the Valencian Community and will continue to record sea turtle bycatch and analyse the interactions between sea turtles and various fisheries in the region. Through this network, and in collaboration with other public and private institutions in the area, UVEG will continue to work with fishers and raise awareness among them for the protection of these endangered species.

In **Tunisia**, FSS has established a strong connection with fishers and the national coastguards, who will continue to frequently report bycatch incidents or turtles in distress. Thanks to this well-established network, awareness activities for fishers regarding best practices to reduce sea turtle mortality will continue. FSS plans to train 20 trainers to expand these efforts, with the goal of distributing 1,000 fisher kits to fishers across all Tunisian ports.

In **Turkey**, PSCA will continue to collaborate with fishers, having established a strong network with them. Fishers are notifying PSCA of bycatch incidents and will continue to do so. The museum and ghost net display around the DEKAMER rescue centre are helping to raise awareness of these activities among stakeholders, tourists, and fishers alike. PSCA is also working very closely with coastguards on all activities, and they are inviting PSCA to meetings with fisher cooperatives. Additionally, PSCA is leading a project; "**A Conservation Project for Reduction of Sea Turtle Mortality in the Mediterranean Coast of Turkey**", funded with a grant received from the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund grant program supported by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) that focuses on bycatch and is also participating in other international projects.

Country	Timing and activity	Cost categories	Yearly cost
Spain	1 year of dissemination of hotline to fishers in Valencia Region, Spain	**Personnel** covered by VARACOMVAL project. Cost estimate currently unavailable.	--
Albania	3 months of training programme for fishermen, for the next 5 years	**Personnel** Wage of staff for educational campaign: 500,00/month → 1.500,00/year **Travel** Transport: 350,00/month → 1.050,00/year **Consumables** Training material: 700,00/year 20 first aid kits distributed yearly (50,00 each): 1.000,00/year 2 rescue kits distributed yearly (400,00 each): 800,00/yea) Refreshments and miscellaneous costs: 150,00/month → 450,00/year Total Consumables: 2.950,00/year **Other Costs** Rent for venues: 400,00/month → 1.200,00/year	6.700,00
Tunisia	4 years for expanding the action aimed to reach 1000 fisher kit distributed to fishermen from all Tunisian ports.	**Personnel** for promotion - FSS will seek for extra funds to cover this activity. **Consumables** for leaflets and kits - FSS will seek for extra funds to cover this activity.	12.500,00
Tunisia	4 years for awareness activity for fishermen about good practices to	**Personnel** for promotion- FSS will partially cover the cost	5.000,00

Country	Timing and activity	Cost categories	Yearly cost
	save bycaught sea turtles will continue after the project end, through the rescue centre activities.	and also will approach NGOs having funds for this activity. **Consumables** for leaflets and kits - FSS will partially cover the cost and will approach NGOs having funds for this activity.	
Tunisia	4 years training of 20 trainers to expand awareness activity (developed in action C2) so they can deliver awareness sessions through all Tunisian ports.	**Personnel** for promotion - FSS will use its own resources to cover training activities.	750,00
Turkey	5 years (grant awarded 2021-2026) PSCA is leading a project; "A Conservation Project for Reduction of Sea Turtle Mortality in the Mediterranean Coast of Turkey" that focuses on bycatch	**Personnel** Supported by the grant received from the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund grant program supported by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) **Consumables** Supported by the grant received from the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund grant program supported by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) **Travel** Supported by the grant received from the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund grant program supported by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	28.460,00
Italy	2 years Fisherman training sections (at least one training section per year).	**Personnel** cost covered by FC	500,00
TOTAL			**259.800,00 EUR**

4. Marine hot-spot areas for sea turtles: dynamic fishery management

The LIFE MEDTURTLES project has gathered information on the spatial distribution of sea turtles using various methods, including capture positions provided by fishers via an app or other means, aerial surveys, and satellite tracking of turtles.

The project has shared this information—identifying hot-spot areas—with fishers, who can then attempt to avoid fishing in these regions.

In **Albania**, HAS will provide hotspot information to fishermen and other stakeholders to support dynamic fishery management. This work will be extended across a broader range of coastal areas in Albania, with HAS collaborating closely with all stakeholders to maximise its outreach. Additionally, HAS will advocate for the inclusion of dynamic fishery management strategies in national and regional policies to institutionalise these practices. To further this effort, HAS aims to increase the distribution of hotspot maps to increase the number of fishermen reporting through the project's hotline or app, thereby further expanding its outreach. Continuous research and monitoring will be conducted to keep hotspot data updated and to adapt management strategies as needed, ensuring effective and responsive conservation efforts.

In **Italy**, FC intends to continue and enhance this approach through collecting reports from recreational boaters, fishers, citizens, and tourists, ensuring that the database remains up-to-date, and that data can be shared effectively. Collaboration with local nautical clubs allows FC to engage a large pool of citizens involved in sport fishing or those who go to sea for recreational or educational purposes, providing an opportunity to receive information on sea turtle distribution through sighting reports. Therefore, FC will maintain and expand collaborations with these entities to increase the range of reports and continue data collection on sightings, using the web app developed within the Project.

In **Spain**, UVEG currently has access to several loggerhead sea turtles that have been satellite-tagged by UVEG and other institutions, with many still transmitting at sea. UVEG will continue collaborating with institutions such as the Polytechnic University of Valencia, which is developing its own transmitters, to tag and monitor additional turtles in the region, including nesting females. New distribution maps for loggerhead turtles are being produced by UVEG using tracking data collected throughout the LIFE MEDTURTLES project. These maps are being compared with existing data on bottom trawler fishing efforts in the western Mediterranean waters to analyse the interaction between this economic activity and sea turtles in the region.

In **Tunisia**, FSS will continue to utilise information from the mobile App to update and improve hotspot maps on an annual basis, while also expanding the scope to cover the entire Tunisian coast. Additional satellite tracking of turtles will further enhance the accuracy of the hotspot areas.

In **Turkey**, PSCA will continue satellite tracking, supported by other funding sources, alongside ongoing drone surveys and Capture, Mark, and Recapture studies to determine sea turtle densities and their habitats. Fishers will continue to avoid areas with high turtle presence, not only to protect the turtles but also to prevent damage to their nets caused by turtle encounters. Additionally, PSCA plans to sustain the same type of monitoring using the drones already in operation.

Country	Timing and activity	Cost categories	Yearly cost
Spain	1 year for processing satellite tag data and GIS analyses to reveal overlap between turtle distribution and fisheries.	**Personnel** covered by InGeNi-Caretta and other projects. Cost estimate currently unavailable.	--
Albania	3 months for hot-spot Information Sharing meeting with fishermen, for the next 5 years	**Personnel** Wage of staff: 500,00/month → 1.500,00/year Travel Transport: 350,00/month → 1.050,00/year **Consumables** Hot-spot maps for distribution and other materials: 700,00/year Refreshments and miscellaneous costs: 150,00/month → 450,00/year Total Consumables: 1.150,00/year **Other Costs** Rent for venues: 400,00/month → 1.200,00/year	4.900,00
Albania	3 months for processing satellite tag data and GIS analyses, for the next 5 years	**Personnel** Wage of data expert: 700,00/month → 2.100,00/year Wage of GIS expert: 850,00/month → 2.550,00/year Total Personnel: 1.550,00/month → 4.650,00/year	4.650,00

Country	Timing and activity	Cost categories	Yearly cost
Tunisia	4 years for using information from the mobile App and update and improve hotspot maps on annual basis, in addition to enlarging the areas of scope to cover all Tunisian coast.	**Personnel** FSS will use its own resources to update the hotspot areas and will look for supporting funds to enlarge the scope but cost estimate currently unavailable.	--
Tunisia	4 years for tagging additional 15 sea turtles to track their route of migration and enhance hotspot areas accuracy.	**Personnel** FSS will look for extra funds to cover satellite tracking activities	15.000,00
Turkey	5 years for satellite tracking.	**Personnel** supported by PSCA other funding sources	5.000,00
Turkey	5 years for drone surveys and Capture, Mark, and Recapture studies to determine sea turtle densities and their habitats.	**Personnel** supported by PSCA own sources	5.000,00
Italy	2 years continue the data collection about sea turtle hotspots thanks to the collaboration with fishermen and volunteers. All the data collected will be shared with the public institutions and citizens.	**Personnel** cost covered by FC	10.000,00
TOTAL			**177.750,00 EUR**

5. Fishing gear modification for reducing turtle bycatch

The LIFE MEDTURTLES project has promoted four modifications to three types of fishing gear that are particularly harmful to sea turtles, through direct demonstrations with fishers on their boats: the **Turtle Excluder Device (TED)** for trawl nets, circle hooks for longlines, and either LED lights or the substitution of set nets with traps.

In **Albania**, HAS will advocate to the respective government agencies for the subsidisation of modified fishing gear, such as TEDs and LEDs, to encourage more fishermen to adopt, implement, and continue using turtle-safe equipment. This advocacy is grounded in findings from the LIFE MEDTURTLES project, where the adoption of such practices has significantly reduced sea turtle bycatch. HAS will offer continuous training sessions and workshops to ensure

that fishermen understand how to use these modified gears and appreciate the benefits of their application. Research on testing and improving turtle-safe gear modifications will also continue, ensuring that the most effective and advanced technologies are employed in the field.

In **Italy**, given the enthusiasm of the fishers involved in the Project, FC intends to continue these activities. FC will prioritise promoting the use of the TED device through ongoing training and by encouraging administrations to allocate funds to transform fishing methods towards greater sustainability, including seeking legal and commercial/economic facilitation. The continuation of the TED demonstration is planned under a new project proposal from the **World Sustainability Foundation**, a non-profit organisation dedicated to protecting global biodiversity. This initiative will be supported by the acquisition of additional TEDs to be distributed to local fishers. Furthermore, FC is part of GALPA, a regional tool for managing the EMFF, and will work to promote and introduce new technologies for increasingly sustainable fishing, with the goal of proposing the TED device as a mandatory tool in the central-northern Adriatic regions. UNIPI aims to increase fishers' direct engagement for better understanding how to promote the adoption of TEDs, including possible technical modifications to adapt to the local needs.

In **Spain**, the UVEG team, equipped with resources and contacts established through the LIFE MEDTURTLES project, is well-positioned to continue conducting trials aimed at evaluating modifications in fishing gear to reduce sea turtle bycatch. UVEG has signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with the **Chelonia Association** to continue performing onboard TED demonstrations within the bottom **trawling fleet of the Valencian Community**, with their support. New trials are scheduled for winter 2024-25.

In **Tunisia**, FSS will continue to investigate the effects of set-net modifications and the use of circle hooks for longlines by increasing the number of experiments across different seasons and extending them to other coastal areas of Tunisia.

In **Turkey**, fishers are generally eager to continue collaborating with PSCA, and a small grant from the USFWS US Fish and Wildlife Service and other international projects will allow the continuation of bycatch reduction activities. PSCA is actively supporting fishers in their use of LED green lights, providing them with nets equipped with these lights. Additionally, PSCA has Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) available for any fishers interested in adopting them. However, fishers have been less enthusiastic about using circle hooks (C hooks), so PSCA may need to conduct further demonstrations to prove their effectiveness.

Country	Timing and activity	Cost categories	Yearly cost
Spain	2 months for TED demonstrations.	**Personnel** covered by the NGO Chelonia: 2 person months 2.000,00 **Fishers' compensation:** 10.000,00	13.000,00

Country	Timing and activity	Cost categories	Yearly cost
		Travel 1.000,00	
Albania	3 months a year TED and LED applications, for the next 5 years	**Personnel** Staff wages: 500,00/month → 1.500,00/year Travel Transport: 350,00/month → 1.050,00/year **Consumables** TED costs: 4.000,00/year LED costs: 8.000,00/year Total Consumables: 1.100,00/month (average) → 12.000,00/year **Other costs** Boat rental: 1.200,00/year	15.750,00
Tunisia	4 years for continuing to investigate more the effect of set-net modification and C hook use, and other mitigation measures (TED) By increasing number of experiments over different seasons and extended to other coastal Tunisian areas.	**Personnel** FSS will look for extra funds to cover this experimentation.	15.000,00
Turkey	5 years (grant awarded 2021-2026) PSCA is leading a project: "A Conservation Project for Reduction of Sea Turtle Mortality in the Mediterranean Coast of Turkey" that focuses on bycatch.	**Personnel** Supported by the grant received from the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund grant program supported by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) **Consumables** Supported by the grant received from the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund grant program supported by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	28.460,00

Country	Timing and activity	Cost categories	Yearly cost
		Travel Supported by the grant received from the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund grant program supported by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	
Italy	2 years for collaboration with fishermen to reduce the sea turtle bycatch and will work to promote and introduce new technologies for increasingly sustainable fishing, with the goal of proposing the TED device as a mandatory tool in the central-northern Adriatic regions.	**Personnel** cost covered by FC	10.000,00
Italy	Next 5 yrs - working with fishers to adjust TEDs to the local fishery	**Personnel** cost covered by UNIPI	3.000,00
TOTAL			**329.050,00 EUR**

6. Rescue centres and networks: increasing sea turtle rehabilitation capacity

The LIFE MEDTURTLES project has significantly enhanced sea turtle rescue capacity in four countries by establishing new rescue centres, improving existing ones, and strengthening the capacity of rescue networks.

In **Albania**, HAS will continue sea turtle rescue operations, supported by the rescue centre established by the project.

In **Italy**, FC will increasingly focus on implementing the available technologies and making full use of the equipment acquired through the project for the rescue centre. Efforts will be made to maintain and invest in the upkeep of this equipment, and if additional funds become available, FC will seek to acquire more. FC will also continue its dialogue with institutions to address the challenges related to converting the former dolphinarium of Rimini into a sea turtle rescue centre. Financial support for the construction of the new facility has been secured from sponsors.

In **Tunisia**, FSS will ensure the continued operation of the newly established rescue centre in Sfax. The centre's capacity will be increased and upgraded, aiming to rescue at least 100 turtles per year, which will include acquiring additional treatment and diagnostic equipment. Furthermore, the Sfax rescue centre will continue to expand its network of collaboration and become an integral part of the National Stranding Network.

In **Turkey**, PSCA is supporting DEKAMER and four other first aid centres, all of which are cooperating to enhance sea turtle rescue efforts. Through this project, a new first aid centre was established in Dalyan city centre, along with another in Manavgat, which will also serve as information centres. The network for transporting injured turtles is managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. Since the first aid centres are only operational during the summer, any injured turtles requiring care over the winter will be transferred to the DEKAMER centre, which has a capacity of 50 tanks in various sizes. No further upgrades to the rescue centre are planned in the short term due to limited funding.

Country	Timing and activity	Cost categories	Yearly cost
Tunisia	15 years for the newly created rescue centre in Sfax will continue to operate after the project end by FSS.	**Personnel** FSS will cover a part of the expenses and will look for additional funds.	1.000,00
Tunisia	15 years for increasing and upgrading the capacity of rescue centre (at least the double) to rescue at least 100 Turtles per year, including acquiring additional treatment and diagnosis equipment.	**Personnel** FSS will look for additional funds to cover the operation personnel and to expand the capacity of the rescue centre.	6.000,00
Turkey	5 years for promoting the new first aid centres were established in Dalyan city centre, along with another in Manavgat, which will also serve as information centres.	**Personnel** The continuation of these first aid centres will be supported by PSCA own sources.	10.000,00
Italy	5 years will invest funds in the maintenance of the equipment and the rehabilitation capacity.	**Personnel** cost covered by FC	44.800,00
TOTAL			**379.000,00 EUR**

7. Reducing the impact of ghost gear in turtles

The LIFE MEDTURTLES project has promoted the reduction of the impact of ghost gear on sea turtles through various approaches, such as mapping and removing ghost gear and raising awareness among fishers about this important conservation issue.

UVEG (Spain) and UNIPI (Italy) are partners in the LIFE OASIS project, which began in September 2024, focusing on the interaction between sea turtles, fish-aggregating devices, and ghost fishing gear. They will use data on sea turtles entangled in ghost fishing gear, recorded during the LIFE MEDTURTLES project, as a baseline for their work in this new LIFE project.

In **Albania**, HAS plans to develop a reporting mechanism for fishers and the public to report sightings of ghost gear, enabling immediate response and retrieval. Based on these reports, periodic cleaning drives will be organised to clear the waters of ghost gear. HAS will also continue distributing the Code of Conduct for 3 months after the project ends, developed by the project to fishers, which contains crucial information for reducing the prevalence of ghost nets in the sea. While it may not be possible to clean the entire seabed of ghost gear, the Code of Conduct aims to raise fishermen's awareness for better and more responsible management of fishing nets, encouraging them to bring back any non-functional nets to the shore instead of discarding them at sea. Additionally, HAS aims to develop incentives for recycling retrieved ghost gear, converting it into valuable products, and is exploring environmentally friendly disposal programmes.

In **Italy**, FC will continue collaborating with diving centres to remove ghost nets and will maintain efforts to raise awareness among the public, including citizens, tourists, and professionals such as fishers, to limit the introduction of these tools into the sea. Leveraging the presence of collection bins, FC will seek to foster collaborations between private entities and professional fishermen to facilitate the conversion of nets within a circular economy framework. Should additional funds become available, FC aims to expand this initiative by distributing containers to other ports or enhancing those already in place.

In **Tunisia**, FSS will ensure the continued use of bins installed in target ports for collecting damaged gear and removed ghost gear. The code of conduct and ghost gear location map developed during this project and distributed to fishers will serve as a reference and guide for fishers. As a member of the Global Ghost Gear Initiative (GGGI), FSS will continue collaborating with other members and NGOs to promote and support awareness, collection, and recycling activities. Ghost gear removal actions will be focused on identified locations. The **Code of Conduct** developed by the project will be distributed and explained to fishers from other ports across the entire coastal area of Tunisia. Additionally, FSS will work on developing a national strategy for the reuse and recycling of collected ghost gear.

In **Turkey**, PSCA is actively engaged in several initiatives in partnership with the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to facilitate the removal of ghost gear. The Ministry has been leading removal campaigns, particularly in cases where PSCA was unable to carry out the removal, ensuring most of the ghost gear is cleared. PSCA also manages ghost net bins, which are

regularly emptied, with the contents displayed around the DEKAMER centre to raise awareness among visitors, who are encouraged to inform PSCA of ghost gear locations. Additionally, maps indicating the current locations of ghost nets have been shared with fishers and fishing cooperatives. Fishers are making every effort to remove the ghost gear themselves, or, if unable to do so, they seek assistance from the Ministry.

Country	Timing and activity	Cost categories	Yearly cost
Albania	3 months of dives to remove ghost gear, for 5 years	**Personnel** Personnel for additional work: 500,00/month → 1.500,00/year **Other Costs** Diver (40 hours/month): 1.000,00/month → 3.000,00/year Boat rental: 1.200,00/year Total Other Costs: 1.100,00/month → 4.200,00/year	5.700,00
Albania	4 months Placing recycling bins in seaports, for 5 years	**Consumables** Bins (5x): 800,00/bin → 4.000,00/year Transport and installation of bins: 300,00/bin → 1.500,00/year	5.500,00
Tunisia	4 years for monitoring the bins installed in the target ports that will continue to be used to collect damaged gears and removed ghost gears. FSS will install other bins specific for ghost gears in all ports of Tunisia. The Code of conduct and the ghost gears location map developed in this project and distributed to	**Personnel** FSS will cover a part of the expenses and will look for additional funds for installing bins. **Consumables** FSS will cover a part of the expenses and will look	7.500,00

Country	Timing and activity	Cost categories	Yearly cost
	fishermen will be used after the end of the project as a reference and guidance for fishermen.	for additional funds for producing bins.	
Tunisia	10 years for activities as member of the Global Ghost Gears Initiative (GGGI) and for continuing to collaborate with other members and NGOs to promote and support the awareness, collections and recycling activities.	**Personnel** FSS will look for additional funds for promoting strategies for recycling and re-use of ghost gears. **Travel** FSS will look for additional funds for promoting strategies for recycling and re-use of ghost gears. **Consumables F**SS will look for additional funds for promoting strategies for recycling and re-use of ghost gears.	2.000,00
Tunisia	4 years for ghost gear removal actions will be continued after project end, based on identified locations	**Personnel** FSS will look for additional funds to cover this action. **Travel** FSS will look for additional funds to cover this action. **Consumables** FSS will look for additional funds to cover this action.	25.000,00
Turkey	5 years for several initiatives in partnership with the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to facilitate the removal of ghost gear. The Ministry has been leading removal campaigns, particularly in cases where PSCA was	**Personnel** Supported by PSCA own sources along with support from the Ministry. **Travel** supported by PSCA own sources	5.000,00

Country	Timing and activity	Cost categories	Yearly cost
	unable to carry out the removal, ensuring the majority of ghost gear is cleared.	along with support from the Ministry.	
Turkey	5 years for promoting and updating maps indicating the current locations of ghost nets have been shared with fishers and fishing cooperatives.	**Personnel** Supported by PSCA own sources. **Travel** supported by PSCA own sources.	5.000,00
Italy	5 years to continue to raise awareness among the public, including citizens, tourists, and professionals such as fishers, to limit the introduction of these tools into the sea. Moreover, FC will seek to find new collaborations with stakeholders to promote the reuse of the ghost gear already collected.	**Personnel** cost covered by FC	40.000,00
TOTAL			**456.000,00 EUR**