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Life EUROSAP Yelkouan Shearwater 2015-2018: the beginning of a Mediterranean scaled cooperation?



Interreg GIREPAM Meeting, Portoferraio, Italia, 8 november 2018



Aim of the projects

LIFE EuroSAP project

Coordinated efforts for international species recovery

Yelkouan Shearwater Species Action Plan

Enforce Yelkouan Shearwater's conservation at mediterranean scale

GIREPAM



The LIFE EuroSAP project - Figures

- **Coordinated efforts for international species recovery**
- Period: 01/04/2015 - 30/09/2018
- Total budget: 837,995€ cofinanced by European Union, AEWA, MAVIA foundation and the 11 beneficiaries (mostly BirdLife partners)
- More than 500 contributors
- 3 continents gathered
- 65 countries
- **8 Species Action Plan (SAP)** and 1 Multi-Species Action Plan (MSAP)

SAP Yelkouan Shearwater - Historic

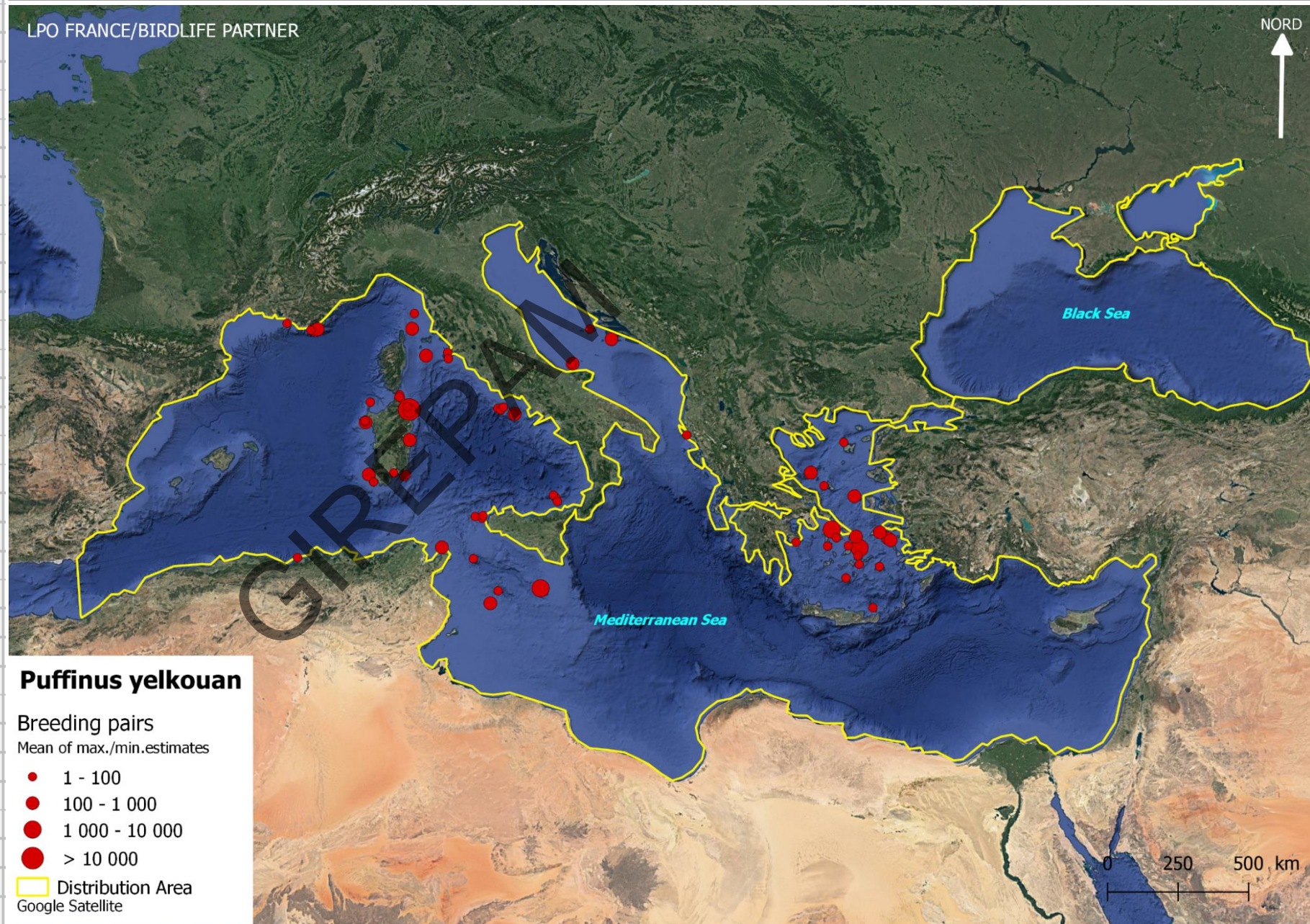
- Beginning of the project : **4 April 2015**
- Workshop: **10-11 October 2016, Paris**
- Status report - final version: **15 January 2017**
- Species Action Plan Draft 1: **28 April 2017**
- Species Action Plan Draft 2: **31 October 2017**
- Species Action Plan Final Report: **31 march 2018**
- Adoption : **23 May 2018**
- “**Eyes on the flyway**” conference: **25 May 2018**
- LIFE EuroSAP 2015-2018 Layman’s Report : **October 2018**
- Lifespan of plan : **10 years (2018-2028)**

Yelkouan Shearwater

- Global population estimate: (2012) 46,000 – 92,000 individuals
- Breeding population estimate: (2018) 21,000 – 36,000 pairs
- Main habitat: at sea (**pelagic** seabird)
- Preferential breeding habitat: rocky areas (islands)
- Life cycle (at sea/on land) → habitats under high human pressure → multiple threats → **strong need for conservation actions!**
- Distribution: Mediterranean and Black sea ([map](#))

Distribution area of Yelkouan Shearwater

Countries	Breeding	Non-breeding
Albania	Yes	Yes
Algeria	Yes	Yes
Austria	No	Yes
Bosnia & Herzegovina	No	?
Bulgaria	Uncertain	Yes
Croatia	Yes	Yes
Cyprus	No	Yes
Egypt	No	Yes
France	Yes	Yes
Georgia	No	?
Gibraltar	No	No
Greece	Yes	Yes
Israel	No	Yes
Italy	Yes	Yes
Lebanon	No	Yes
Libya	No	Yes
Macedonia	No	Yes
Malta	Yes	Yes
Monaco	No	Yes
Montenegro	No	Yes
Morocco	No	No
Palestinian territory (occupied)	No	?
Romania	No	Yes
Russia	No	Yes
Slovenia	No	Yes
Spain	Uncertain	Yes
Syrian Arab Republic	No	?
Switzerland	No	No
Tunisia	Yes	Yes
Turkey	Uncertain	Yes
United Kingdom	No	No
Ukraine	No	Yes
Yugoslav Republic	No	Yes



Puffinus yelkouan

Breeding pairs

Mean of max./min. estimates

- 1 - 100
- 100 - 1 000
- 1 000 - 10 000
- > 10 000

□ Distribution Area
Google Satellite



Threats ranking

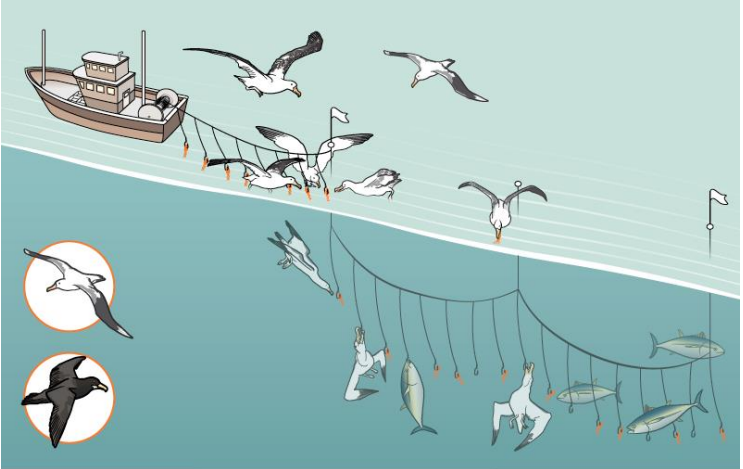
Habitat	Threats / Threat level	Critical	High	Medium	Low
At sea	Bycatch	■			
	Decreasing fish stocks		■		
	Chronic pollution		■		
	Marine habitat loss			■	
	Acute pollution			■	
	Climate change			■	
	Poaching			Unknown	
Collisions			Unknown		
On land	Predation by alien species		■		
	Breeding habitat loss			■	
	Human disturbance			■	
	Light pollution			■	
	Collisions			■	
	Habitat degradation			■	
	Interspecific competition			■	
	Predation by native predators			■	
Harvesting				■	

- **Critical:** a factor causing or likely to cause very rapid declines and/or extinction
- **High:** a factor causing or likely to cause rapid decline leading to depletion
- **Medium:** a factor causing or likely to cause relatively slow, but significant, declines
- **Low:** a factor causing or likely to cause fluctuations



Threats ranking – Major threats

- Threats affecting **adult survival** (breeding grounds & at sea)
→ are the **drivers of the decline**
 - At sea → Incidental fishing bycatch (longline) **Main threat** → **LOW Adult survival**
 - On breeding grounds → Invasive predators (Black Rats & Feral Cats)
→ **LOW Breeding success**



<http://www.emilymeng.com/>



<http://www.searchukpestcontrol.co.uk/img/pest-prevention/black-rat.png>



© Wolfgang Kruck

Goals of the AP for Yelkouan Shearwater

- Conservation status: **VU** (2012)
- Population trend: **declining** (poor quality data)
- **Protected under national legislation in 10 countries out 25 visited**: Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Romania, Spain, Tunisia.
- **What about Yelkouan Shearwater in the Black Sea? What happens after they pass the Bosphorus?**



⇒ The implementation of the Action Plan must :

- **Restore the species/population to Least Concern status (IUCN Red List)**
- **Prevent the further decline** of its population by **mitigation of major threats**
- **Increase the species protection** (under national laws in more countries & more protected area declaration)
- Conduct **research** in areas with a **significant knowledge gap**



Objectives

- **Objective 1:** Increase adult survival up to $\geq 92\%$ and breeding success up to $\geq 75\%$ (Louzao *et al.* 2006)
- **Objective 2:** Improve breeding habitat quality within 10 years and foraging habitat quality in the long term
- **Objective 3:** Acquire more information on the species' distribution and numbers in order to be more confident about its status

Results expected with the implementation

- **Result 1.1.** Average adult survival rate is close or over 92%
- **Result 1.2.** Average breeding success rate is close or over 75%
- **Result 2.1.** Conservation of breeding habitat is ensured
- **Result 2.2.** Conservation of marine habitat (foraging and congregating areas) is ensured
- **Result 3.0.** Knowledge gaps are filled

Main structure of the actions

- **Understand** the extent of threats (data collection, identify sites under threats, evaluation of the level of impact)
- **Monitor/Assess** adult survival and breeding success
- **Identify** and **Implement** mitigation/management measures
- **Promote/Lobby** mitigation measures in policy
- **Raise local stakeholders' awareness** (communication campaigns about YS and seabirds in general)
- **Report** every 1-2 years for actions & 5 years for results
- *Name of the countries the action is applicable to*

SAP methodology – to summarise

Results	Actions (examples)	Priority	Timescale	Organization responsible
<p>Result 1.1. Average adult survival rate is close or over 92%</p> <p>Result 1.2. Average breeding success rate is close or over 75%</p> <p>Result 2.1. Conservation of breeding habitat is ensured</p> <p>Result 2.2. Conservation of marine habitat (foraging and congregating areas) is ensured</p> <p>Result 3.0. Knowledge gaps are filled</p>	<p>1.1.1. Decrease the by-catch risk</p> <p>1.2.1. Decrease breeding failure caused by alien predators</p> <p>2.1.1. Maintain the extent of available breeding habitat to current levels</p> <p>2.2.1. Maintain the extent of available suitable marine habitat to current levels</p> <p>3.0.1. Monitor the movement in Turkish straits to collect information on max numbers and origin (telemetry) of birds that pass through the Bosphorus</p>	<p>Essential</p> <p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>Short (next 3 years)</p> <p>Medium (next 5 years)</p> <p>Long (next 10 years)</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Rolling (to be implemented perpetually)</p>	<p>EU</p> <p>Local authorities</p> <p>Research institutes</p> <p>NGOs</p> <p>Management and administrative institutions</p> <p>Fisheries</p> <p>Public Institutions involved in marine biodiversity protection/management/conservation/ restoration</p> <p>Protected areas managers</p> <p>Chemical industries</p> <p>Energy companies</p> <p>Shipping activities (for ex. oil tankers)</p> <p>Commercial transportship companies</p> <p>(...)</p>

Advantages/Limits for SAP Implementation

Advantages

Following the aim of gathering and building strong partnerships between the concerned stakeholders, Malta is a **great and hopeful example!**

Thanks to studies conducted by BirdLife Malta on the impact of demersal long-lining on Yelkouan Shearwater bycatch, Maltese fishermen voluntarily use **weighted lines and thawed baits instead of frozen baits since 2011.**

This hopeful example can help generalizing this kind of initiatives to every Mediterranean countries !

Advantages/Limits for SAP Implementation

Advantages

African-Eurasian Species Action Plan Coordination Group was established on 25 May 2018

- Will provide the coordination needed to guarantee the continuation and successful implementation of the AP
- Communication hub between large international decision-making conventions, institutions, other organizations and associations
- Allow an efficient collaboration between the countries of the 3 continents for the conservation of the species

Advantages/Limits for SAP Implementation

Limits

- Recent ship crash in the North of Corsica has demonstrated that **risks of pollution, even within key protected areas** (Pelagos, Port Cros, Tavolara...), are **still very high**

(if this had taken place in another season, it would have been a disaster for the core pop of YS)

- For « rolling » actions, monitoring is extremely important...
 - ***But will EU countries do this reliably under the Marine Strategy?***
 - Need for common protocols at least France+Italy+Malta (for ex.)
 - Need for a kind of « coordinator » at the Mediterranean scale for SAP implementation with an interlocutor in every country

Advantages/Limits for SAP Implementation

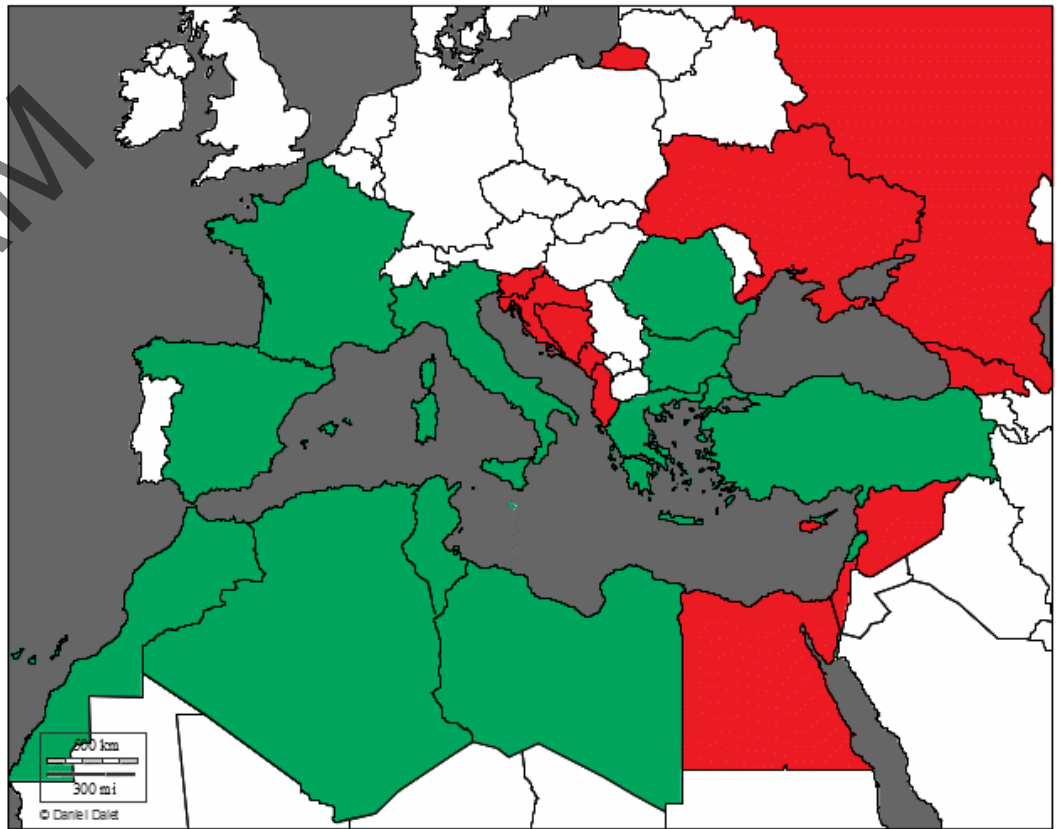
Limits

- Initiatives outside of the « Yelkouan Shearwater agreement » given by the Action Plan, without any link to it, represent a risk for the good implementation of the AP:
 - Competition for funding
 - May not reflect general priorities nor the local ones
 - Divert the scientific interest from the main objectives

A Mediterranean cooperation perspective

13 countries were involved in the AP Working Group out of 25 visited by Yekouan Shearwater along its lifecycle

Strong need to involve the other countries from the Mediterranean and the Black Sea in Yekouan Shearwater Protection & Conservation!



A Mediterranean cooperation perspective

→ Develop a **strong cooperation between all the countries (Med+BS)**

• **How?**

- Through a common goal, common tools, innovative collaborations and partnerships, collaborative research and conservation projects, communication campaigns at multiple scales (Med→local (national)), ...

For example...

- Data collection projects for knowledge gaps filling about species phenology, distribution, new threats
- Communication campaigns for sharing information about the species, threats, conservation issues (cf. AP)

• **What for?**

- Give a **wider and better adapted protection** to the species all along its life cycle
- **Restore** the species/population conservation status **to a better one** (get it out of the Red list!)

Link with GIREPAM Project

- Cross-border strategy (France/Italy)
- Reach to an Integrated management of the Protected area
- Human pressure mitigation in the marine environnement proposing solutions to important problems like overfishing, pollution, recurrent social conflicts

→ A project like GIREPAM is a good context for the implementation of some actions from the Action Plan on Yelkouan Shearwater

Thanks/Grazie/Remerciements

Thank you so much for your attention! Any questions?

Grazie mille per la vostra attenzione! Avete domande?

Merci beaucoup pour votre attention! Avez-vous des questions?

GIREPAM



Useful links

- SAP Tracking tool with project timeline:
<http://www.trackingactionplans.org/SAPTT/sapTimeline/42>
- SAP Yelkouan Shearwater Final Report :
<http://www.trackingactionplans.org/SAPTT/downloadDocuments/openDocument?idDocument=62>
- Life EuroSAP 2015-2018 Layman's report :
https://www.birdlife.org/sites/default/files/life_eurosap_laymans_report.pdf
- Life EuroSAP Page: <https://www.birdlife.org/europe-and-central-asia/project/life-eurosap>