

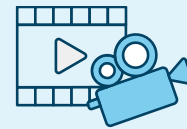
TOGETHER
FOR THE MED |

MEDITERRANEAN COMMUNITIES LEAD THE WAY IN OCEAN PROTECTION

In the wake of the UN Ocean Conference in Nice, the Together for the Med partnership has released a powerful new video spotlighting a message of hope and determination: strong marine protection works—and it's driven by coastal communities.

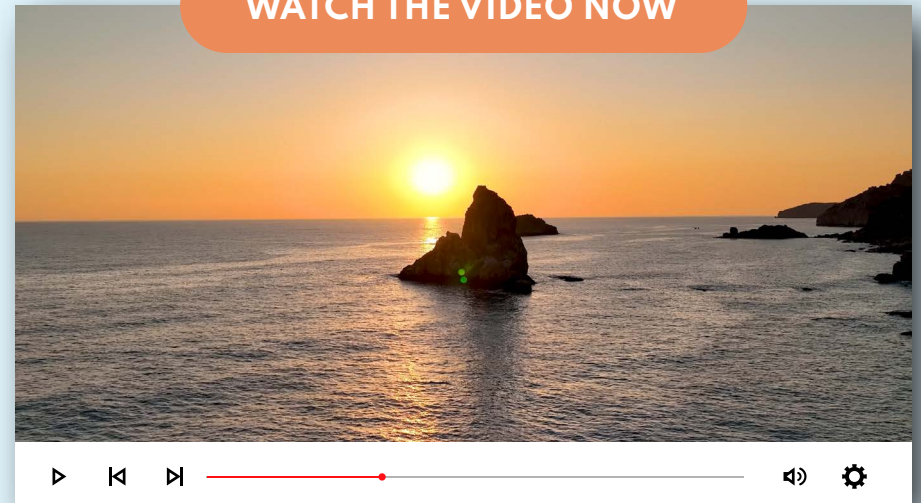
Far from being opposed to conservation, local actors—especially small-scale fishers—are often the ones championing it.

Across the Mediterranean, they are helping to create and defend no-take zones, proving that ocean conservation and thriving coastal economies can go hand in hand.



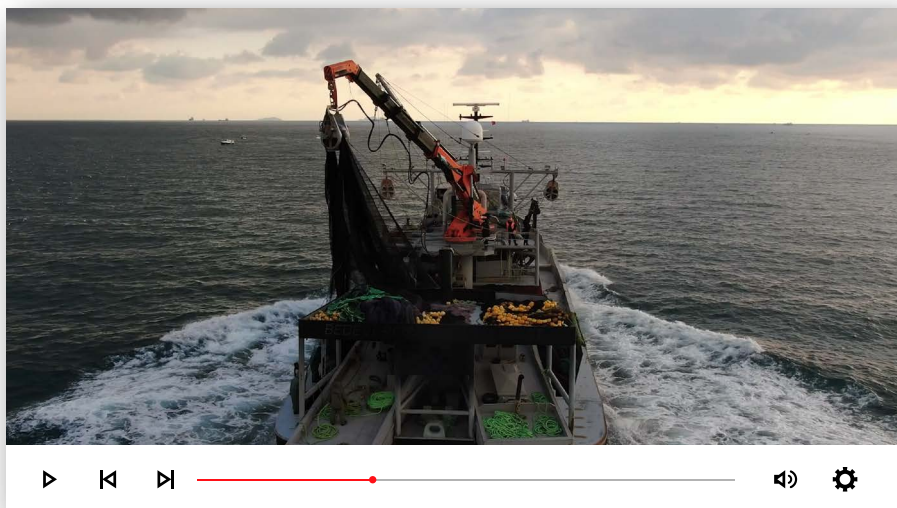
**New video series from
Together for the Med
celebrates local action**

WATCH THE VIDEO NOW



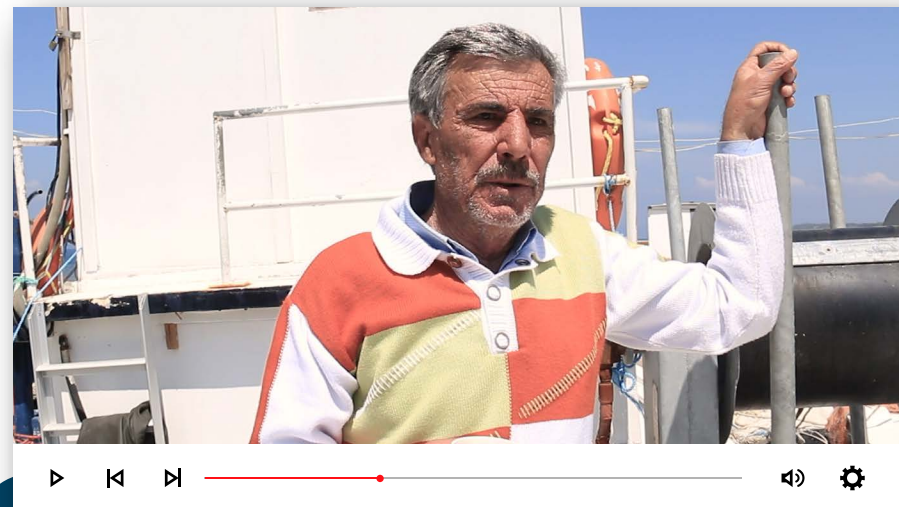
VOICES FROM THE COAST: STORIES OF LOCAL ACTORS IN MARINE PROTECTION

Together for the Med—bringing together 50 Mediterranean organisations dedicated to marine conservation—produced a video that take viewers deep into local strong protection efforts in Cyprus, France, Italy, Montenegro, Spain, Tunisia, and Türkiye.



Coastal livelihoods under pressure

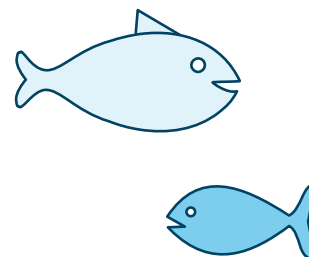
The reality on the ground is difficult for coastal communities. Across the Mediterranean, catch volumes have plummeted, and locals who rely on their marine environment are finding their livelihoods threatened. Many coastal fishers feel troubled by environmental degradation and lack of support.



“Small-scale fishing is on the brink of collapse. The next generation isn't taking it up. They see the situation. Things are bad for small-scale fishers.”

Hikmet Tunç

Member of Guneyli Fisheries
Cooperative, Türkiye



This video challenges a common misconception: marine conservation is not seen as a burden by local communities, but rather as a collective choice to safeguard the ecological and economic future of coastal areas.

Renewal: Communities leading the way

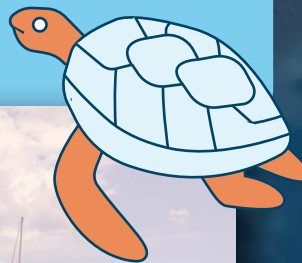
The main film highlights the voices of actors from across the Mediterranean—especially fishers—who are actively engaged in protecting the sea.

As human pressures on the Mediterranean grow and fish stocks decline, these people show that conservation is not an obstacle, but a powerful tool for building a better future.

"Yes, at first it might seem like a burden for us fishers... But in the long run, we always benefit from it."

Silverio Sandolo

President of the Villasimius Fishers' Cooperative, Italy



"I dove in [the Cap Roux marine reserve] and it's exceptional. For me, it's like the Mediterranean from 100 or 150 years ago—and it's all thanks to the fishers who decided to protect this place."

Alexis Rosenfeld

Underwater Photographer & Explorer, France

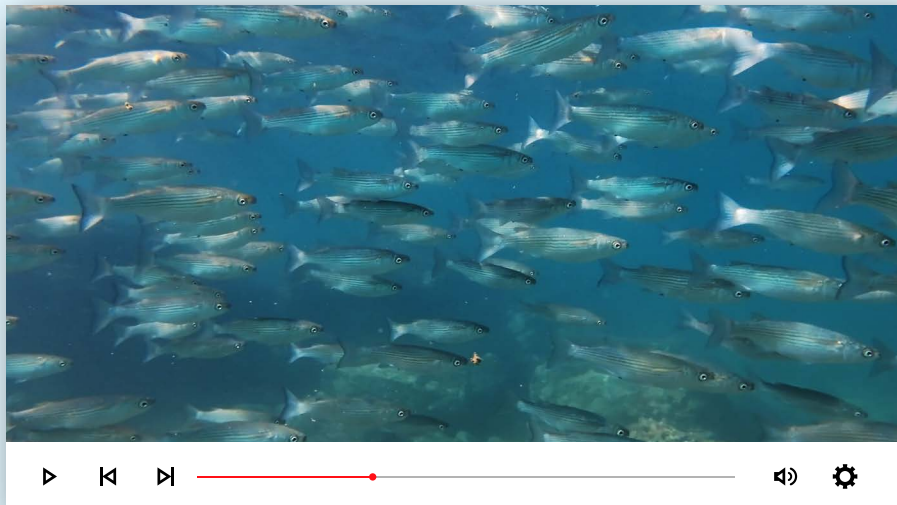
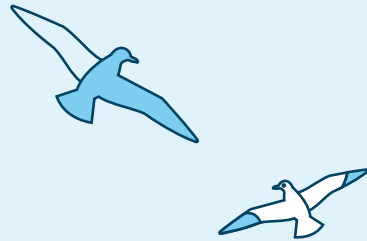


Through interviews of local stakeholders, the video shows how strong protection measures—particularly no-take zones—can lead to a remarkable recovery of biodiversity and marine resources.

Stronger together: Collaboration is key

The video also exposes the challenges faced by coastal communities: the time it takes to see results, the lack of legal recognition in some countries, and the pressing need for surveillance and shared governance. Yet, the testimonies all point in the same direction: when local communities are involved in management, the results are concrete and lasting.

The video ends on a hopeful note, underscoring that the goal of protecting 30% of the Mediterranean Sea by 2030 is achievable if we build on local leadership and foster collaboration between fishers, scientists, NGOs, and policymakers.



"There is no effective nature protected area if there is no support from the local community."

Dušan Varda

Chairman at MedCEM, Montenegro



Stay tuned!

A new episode of our video series will be released each Tuesday from July 8 to August 12. Follow us on social media to stay updated.



ECHOES OF A MILESTONE EVENT AT UNOC 2025

The release of this video and a series of short interviews follows the successful side event co-organised by Together for the Med and Med Sea Alliance at the UN Ocean Conference : “Working Together for Effective Marine Protected Areas: The Mediterranean as a ‘Hope Spot’ for Change”.

Together, these two regional coalitions—representing more than 70 Mediterranean organisations—issued a strong call: commit to protecting 30% of the Mediterranean by 2030, with at least 10% under strict protection across the region.

The event gathered NGOs and donors from across the region, including panellists from Spain, Tunisia, Italy and Türkiye, to spotlight successful regional collaborations, share lessons learned, and explore scalable solutions for accelerating progress toward the 30x30 target.



ABOUT

TOGETHER FOR THE MED

Since 2017, the Together for the Med network has brought together Mediterranean organizations working in marine conservation, with 50 partners across 15 countries.

Our mission is to reduce fishing pressure and protect coastal ecosystems and communities by building bridges between governance, science, and policy.

The partners collaborate on the design and implementation of conservation projects aimed at achieving two key objectives:

Strengthen marine protected areas

In a region where only 8% of the sea is designated as an MPA—and a mere 0.04% under strict protection—the partnership works to expand and improve MPAs, particularly in the southern and eastern Mediterranean. This includes boosting participatory governance, increasing no-take zones, and advocating for better regional coordination and political frameworks.

Reduce bycatch and fishing impacts on biodiversity

With bycatch and unsustainable fishing posing a serious threat to vulnerable species like dolphins, turtles, and seabirds, the initiative promotes proven technical solutions, economic incentives for small-scale fishers, and participatory data collection—while pushing for national and regional policy reforms.



[DOWNLOAD THE BROCHURE](#)

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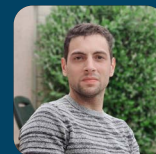
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