



CONVENTIONAL SIGNS

- **Waters beyond baselines**
 - Scuba diving
 - Professional trolling
 - Setting of two "morunas gruesas"
- **Waters inside baselines**
 - Scuba diving with prior authorization of "Consellería"
 - Professional hook-fishing (except long-lines)
 - Setting of ten "morunas xirreteras" from september to november
- **Anchorage areas**
- **Buoys** (External delimitation of marine reserve)
- **No-take Area**

LEYENDA

- **Zonas de aguas exteriores**
 - Buceo autónomo
 - Pesca profesional al curricán
 - Calamento de dos morunas gruesas
- **Zona de aguas interiores**
 - Buceo autónomo con autorización de la Consellería
 - Pesca profesional de anzuelo (salvo palangre y variantes)
 - Calamento 10 morunas xirreteras de septiembre a noviembre
- **Zonas autorizadas de fondeo**
- **Boyas** (Delimitación exterior de la reserva marina)
- **Área de Máxima Protección**



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ISLA DE TABARCA

marine reserve



1986



NIFO 770-09-004-9

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DESIGNATION

The wealth and good state of conservation of the waters and sea bottoms surrounding the archipelago of Plana island or Nueva Tabarca led the way to the designation of the first Spanish marine reserve.

In 1986 the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAPA – Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación) and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food of the Generalitat Valenciana (Conselleria de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación de la Generalitat Valenciana) designated the marine reserve under Ministerial Order of 4th April 1986 (BOE no. 112 of 10th May) and Order of 4th April of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (DOGV no. 397 of 27th June), based on a study that Alicante City Council had commissioned to the city's university.

It comprises internal waters, within the remit of the Generalitat Valenciana, and external waters, whose management falls within the remit of Central Government, holding a total surface area of 1,754 ha.

The marine reserve of Isla de Tabarca also belongs to the Natura 2000 Network.

AIMS OF THE MARINE RESERVE

Artisanal fisheries

One of the missions of the marine reserve is to protect, regenerate and develop resources of fisheries interest to maintain sustainable fisheries enabling artisanal fishermen in the area to preserve their traditional way of life; objectives which are achieved by reducing the impact of fishing on the protected area.

Protecting the flora and fauna of its waters and bottoms

Throughout history the scarce population of the Nueva Tabarca island has enabled a more successful conservation of its waters and bottoms to that of the neighbouring Iberian peninsula coast. Today, as a marine reserve, we are succeeding in preserving, perpetuating and enriching this wonderful natural legacy, as the exceptional flora and fauna of its waters and bottoms.

Marine research and nature observation

The well-preserved bottoms of Tabarca are ideal for regulated low-impact activities such as scuba diving and snorkelling, so not only can the general public enjoy its wealth of natural assets, but also awareness of these assets is raised too. It goes without saying that assets such as these are of enormous interest to the scientific community as an endless source of information and

research on marine life is revealed by its waters.

BOUNDARIES AND AREAS

The marine reserve

The reserve falls between the following points
 a: 38° 09' 38" N; 000° 25' 24" W
 b: 38° 08' 31" N; 000° 25' 50" W
 c: 38° 10' 44" N; 000° 29' 39" W
 d: 38° 09' 38" N; 000° 30' 09" W

WGS- 84 Datum coordinates

No-take reserve

"In the shallow waters area of La Llosa at depths of less than 20 metres and to the east of the north-south line which passes through the far east of the 10-metre lead of the isle of Nao".

ACTIVITIES IN THE MARINE RESERVE

Prohibited activities

- Anchoring throughout the marine reserve, with the exception of special areas (south area off Tabarca beach and north area off the port). Similarly, vessels may not be anchored on rocky surface-level reefs
- Underwater fishing throughout the marine reserve
- Any kind of recreational fishing
- Free diving in waters beyond baselines
- Any removal of flora or fauna which is not authorized, mineral matter or any part of marine organisms, unless expressly authorized

Activities subject to authorization

In waters beyond baselines

- Professional surface trolling for professional fishermen with vessels registered in the 3rd list
- Professional trammel net fishing in the specified area in Barra Norte for professional fishermen with vessels registered in the 3rd list (*)
- The immersion of two coarse moruna nets by the Fishermen's Association of Tabarca: one to the northeast and another to the southeast of the isle of Nao,

from 1st April to 30th June each year

- Scuba diving in authorized areas, south of La Llosa and Nao, according to maximum daily immersion capacities (*), with the prior authorization from the Sub-office of the Government in Alicante, Agency for the Functional Area for Agriculture and Fisheries (Subdelegación del Gobierno de Alicante, Dependencia del Área Funcional de Agricultura y Pesca)
- Scientific sampling requiring authorization from the General Secretariat of the Sea (SGM – Secretaría General del Mar)

In waters inside baselines

- Professional bait fishing (bottom fishing, angling, trolling), except longlines and any variants, for professional fishermen with vessels registered in the 3rd list
- Professional trammel net fishing in the specified area in Barra Norte for professional fishermen with vessels registered in the 3rd list (*)
- The immersion of a maximum of 10 "moruna xirretera" nets by the Fishermen's Association of Tabarca from October to December
- Scuba diving in authorized areas (Escull Roig, Tabarca Artificial Reef, Escull Negre, islet of Galera and free waters inside baselines), according to maximum daily immersion capacities (*), with prior authorization of the Territorial Services of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (Dirección Territorial de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación) of the Generalitat Valenciana in Alicante

(*): Ministerial Order of 24th July 2000 amending Order of 4th April 1986, BOE no. 184 of 2nd August; Order of 19th October 2000, DOGV no. 3,868 of 31st October

BIOLOGICAL COMMUNITIES

Contrasting with the aridity of the land, the ocean bottoms of Tabarca are covered with *Posidonia Oceanica* beds, an aquatic plant found only in the Mediterranean, forming one of the most productive communities of the biosphere. The oxygen the plant produces purifies and enriches the waters while the meadow's blanket of foliage serves as a refuge for many fish juveniles and larvae. The abundance of dead leaves form characteristic beds on the coast, suggesting a good state of conservation of the surrounding bottoms and help to form and conserve the beaches by retaining fine sediments and lessening the erosive effects of waves and currents.

The bottoms of the reserve teem with invertebrates such as sponges, sea fans, starfish, urchins, pen shells, cephalopods and crustaceans, amongst others. A huge variety of fish can be found lurking amongst the rocks and plants (Mediterranean morays [*Muraena spp.*], conger eels [*Conger conger*], groupers [*Epinephelus spp.*], painted combers [*Serranus spp.*] and red mullets [*Mullus surmulletus*]) or flitting through the water (salps, sand smelts, dentex, sea breams, gilthead sea breams

and greater amberjacks, to name just a few).

One way or another Tabarca's privileged marine environment enables the development and conservation of living coastal resources, particularly those of artisanal fisheries interest.

RESOURCES

The marine reserve of Tabarca has a fisheries patrol which, amongst other tasks, undertakes surveillance and protection with the aid of various vessels: "Posidonia II", "Llania", "Lisa" and "Punta Falcón".

The marine reserve's perimeter is duly marked on all four sides and in the middle of the longest sides by six floats fitted with a light and topmark. Similarly, there are anchored floats for vessels in authorized anchoring areas and for anchoring vessels taking authorized divers to each of the specified diving areas, in waters both inside and beyond baselines.

To protect the marine reserve's bottoms, artificial reefs made of concrete modules and some sunken wooden fishing boat hulls – properly cleaned and prepared - have been set up.

These barriers impede illegal fisheries activity, protecting the bottoms while providing shelter and areas for colonization, feeding and laying for different marine organisms of interest for artisanal fishing and the wider community.

RESULTS

A recovery of species of fisheries interest has been observed since the designation of the marine reserve. Catches around the marine reserve have risen, proving that the effect goes beyond the limits of the reserve.

Protecting this area is favourable for visitors, while awareness campaigns bring marine life – so little understood - closer to the wider community.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

A marine reserve is a protected area. Its conservation depends on everyone.

- Find out about its restrictions.
- Cooperate in its protection and maintenance and do remember that it is **prohibited** to:
 - Practice underwater fishing
 - Practice any kind of fishing or removal of sea flora and fauna, unless granted authorization in the social interests of the fishermen of Tabarca
 - Possess any device used by divers or fishermen which could be used for fishing or harvesting marine species
- For enquiries and information, please contact the Tabarca marine reserve maintenance and protection service hotline on +34 600 912 749 or +34 600 912 750

Scuba diving authorization is granted by the Dirección Territorial del MARM in Alicante or the Servicios Territoriales de la Conselleria del Territorio y Vivienda de la Generalitat Valenciana.

Divers are to carry documentation (authorization and supporting documentation) to be shown on request by marine reserve maintenance and protection officers, with whom the captain of the divers' vessel is to make either radio or telephone contact as soon as possible on the day of the dive.