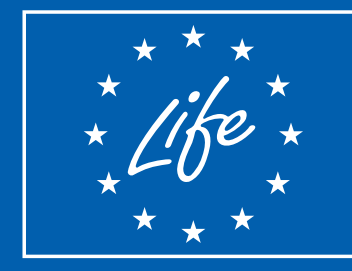




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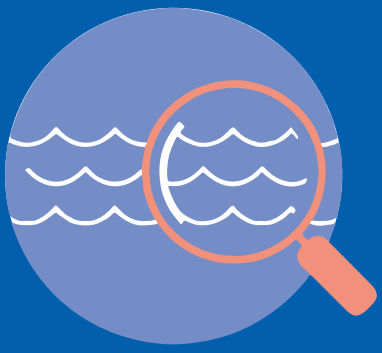
THE LIFE Ecorest Project

Innovation and cooperation to restore marine habitats of the Catalan coast

Objective

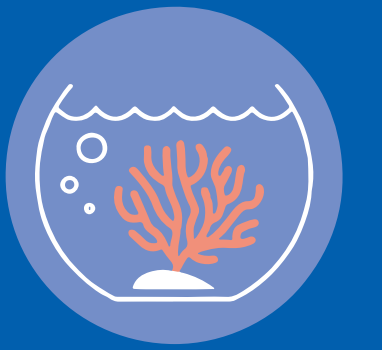
To restore around 30,000 hectares of deep-sea habitats with a high ecological value located off the coast of the provinces of Girona and Barcelona, both in Catalonia, with the active collaboration of the fishing sector.

Actions



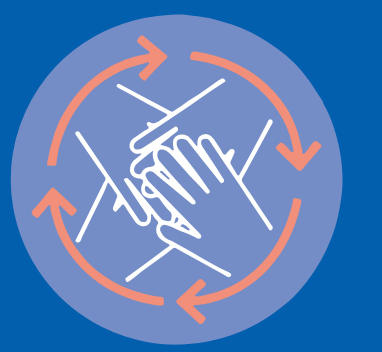
Research

Studies and research campaigns.



Conservation

Recovery and ecological restoration of gorgonians, corals, sponges, and other structuring organisms.



Participation, capacitation and governance

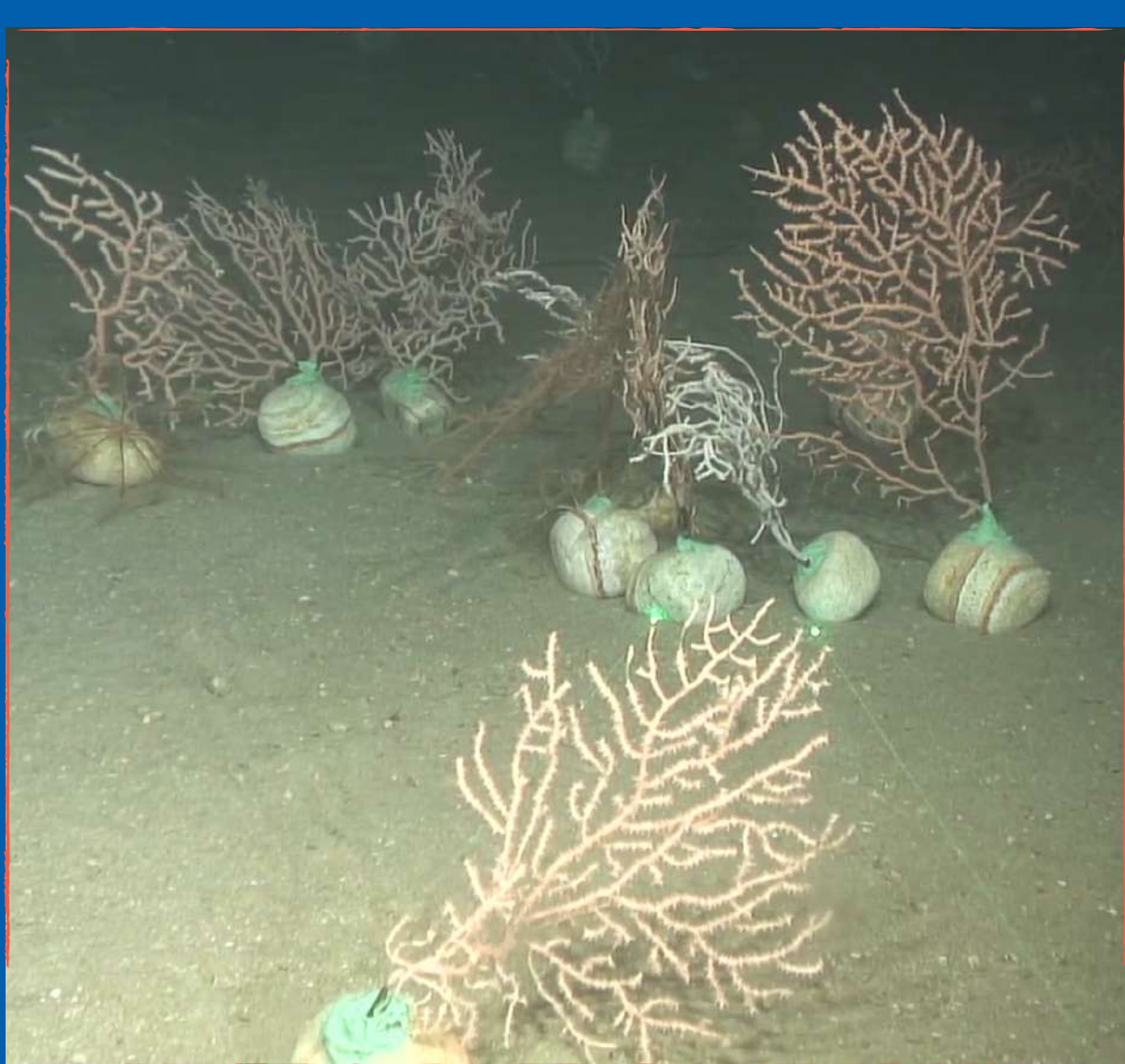
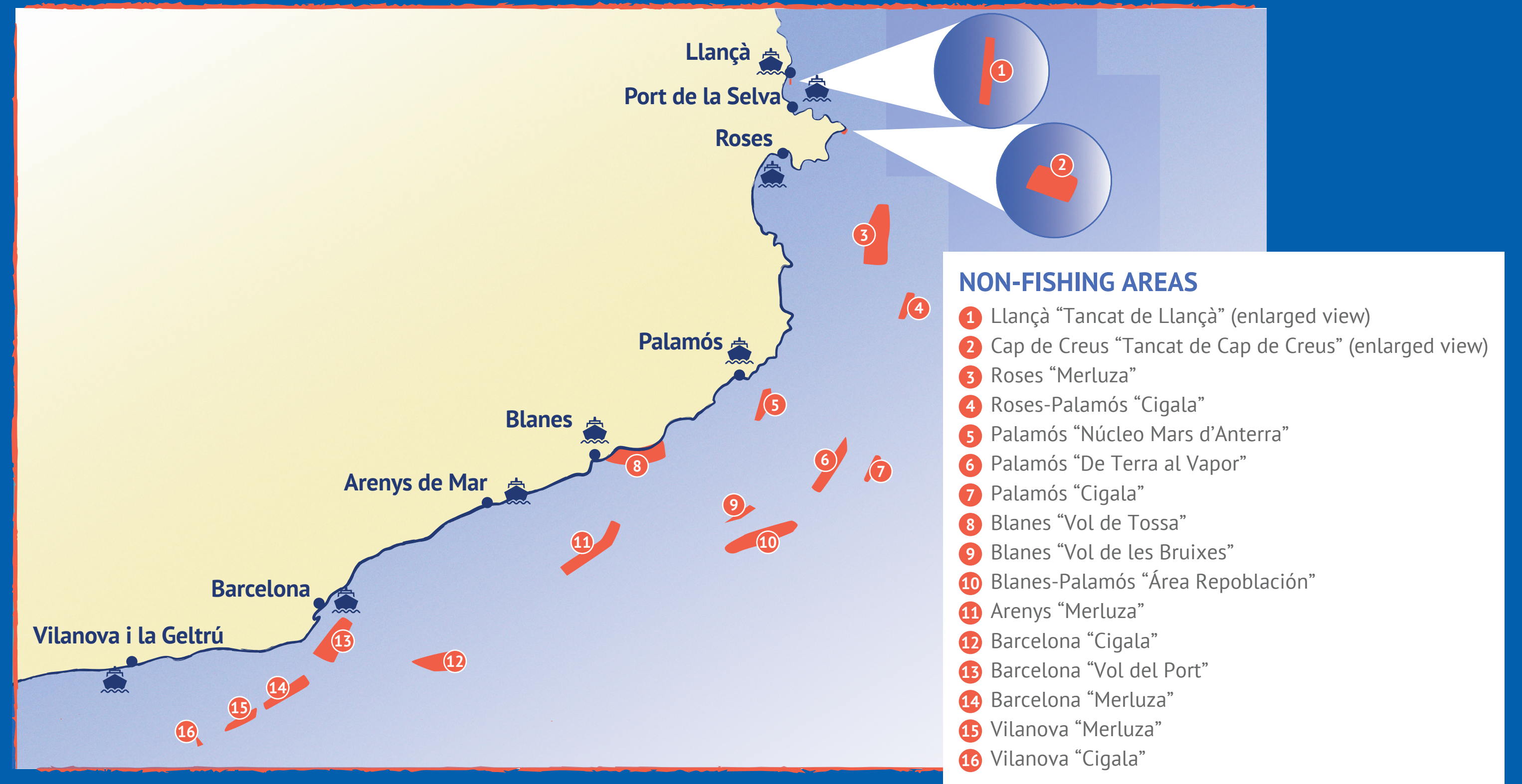
Driving participative processes.



Dissemination, education and transfer of results

Activities for the local population, fishing and school communities.

Area of action



What is marine restoration?

The marine ecosystems are home to essential habitats and species for the planet. At a time of environmental emergency like this one, with degraded sea beds and the loss of species, marine restoration is an ally to reverse this situation and preserve natural heritage.

Passive restoration: through the establishment of protection areas and bans, regulating fishing activity and allowing for the natural recovery of marine ecosystems.

Active restoration: through the recovery of organisms accidentally captured in fishing nets and their release back into the sea. It accelerates the process of natural recovery.

One of the central values of the LIFE Ecorest project is the participation of the fishing sector to protect and conserve key ecosystems. A highly diverse ocean and in good conditions of conservation helps resist the effects of climate change.

Process of active restoration

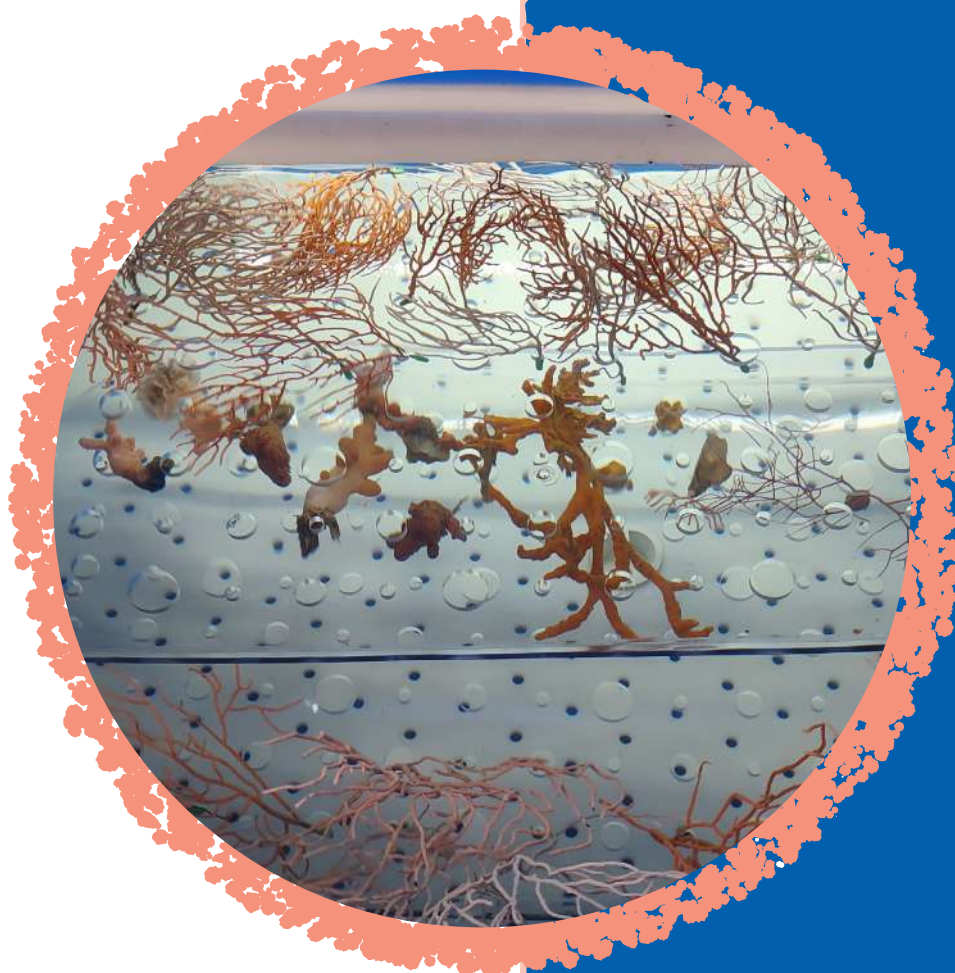
1

Fishers capture **organisms bycatch** in fishing nets, such as corals and gorgonians.



2

The specimens are transferred to **aquariums installed at the fishers' associations'** (*cofradías*) facilities where they are maintained and recovered.



3

Recovered individual specimens are released to the sea using **the badminton method**, which consist in fixing organisms to a cobble and gently tossing them from deck. This technique allows organisms to reach the seafloor and remain in an upright position.



Species to restore



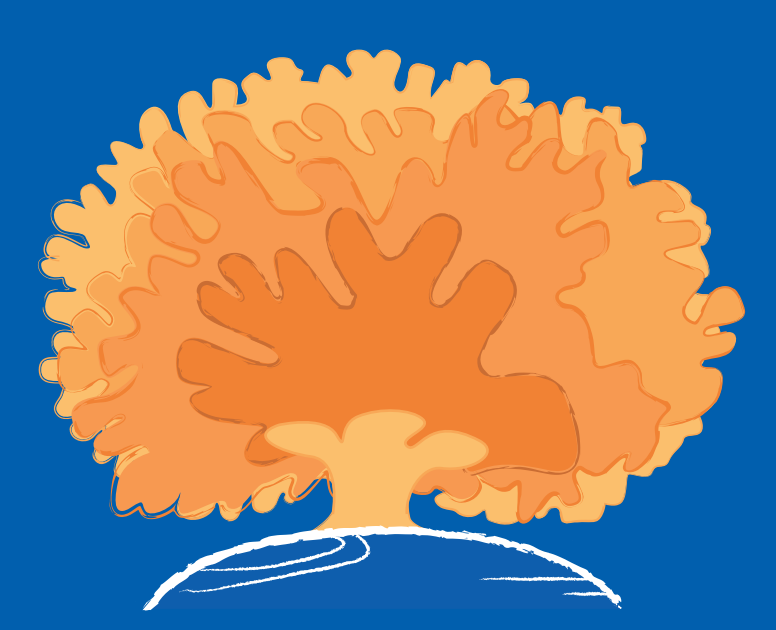
Gorgonians



Corals



Sponges



Bryozoans

- **Sessile organisms**, which live attached to the sea bed.
- They feed themselves by **capturing or filtering suspended organic particles**, transported by the currents.
- These organisms have an incalculable value as **engineering species** by providing **refuge and feeding grounds** to a wide range of associated species.

Find out more

The LIFE Ecorest project is coordinated by the ICM-CSIC, and its partners are the Federació Territorial de Confraries de Pescadors de Girona, the Biodiversity Foundation of the Ministry for Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge, the University of Barcelona and WWF España, and has benefited from a financial contribution of the European Union LIFE Programme.



The LIFE Ecorest Project

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