

# Seahorses as flagship species

For Mar menor Coastal Lagoon Conservation

Our **mission** could be defined to raise awareness on coastal and marine habitats protection through research and monitor the long-snouted seahorses' (*Hippocampus guttulatus*) population considered as a flagship species in the Mar Menor Coastal lagoon.

Our **vision** is to implement a wider coastal, marine and underwater conservation multi-sector strategy that would include legally binding conservation management plans, which would also prescribe for the nationally endorsed long-term monitoring of the marine habitats and species that are critically at risk in a Natura 2000 site. Our main activities have been Fishermen brotherhoods, media and visitor Awareness Campaigns, Long-term marine habitat and species monitoring, Data seahorse networking, and environmental marine education for locals and visitors.



MAR MENOR - MURCIA,  
SPAIN

Mar menor Coastal Lagoon  
(Sea Minor), Murcia Region.  
SE of Spain – Mediterranean

LOCATION

*Eight years dealing  
with Seahorses,  
Volunteers and  
Institutional conser-  
vation practices in  
Natura 2000 places*

## OUTCOMES/RESULTS

- 1 After a local fishermen awareness campaign, they accepted to provide key historical data from Seahorses fishing.
- 2 At least two Fishermen brotherhoods for Murcia Region ( Mar menor and Cartagena) are more aware about Seahorse conservation initiatives
- 3 At least 4 times this year, Hippocampus Association has been on the news by participating on National radio and Regional TV programs. Additionally another 4 press articles about seahorses has been published on regional newspapers and one is going to be published in a Youth magazine in Slovakia ( 8 months project ).

SEAHORSES  
FISHERMEN  
UNDERWATER MONITORING

KEYWORDS



**4** 2015 Underwater monitoring census program is on going on a monthly basis since April with high volunteer's participation (Fully booked for each diving site).

**5** More general public and other organizations and individuals are asking and interested to participate with Hippocampus Association during the year 2015.

**6** We have been recently invited to join to FARNET EU initiative for community led local development with fisheries local action groups up to 2020

**7** Three national and international organizations (Seahorse trust UK, Kenna Eco-Diving centre / Cataluña and CUASS Seville) are linked with us recently for sharing data and working together in new projects.

**8** A [new video](#) about Hippocampus has been recently released mentioning our work.

**6** Start building you contacts' network now and identify right stakeholders and key strategic allies.

**7** By word of mouth is a very powerful way to promote your project amongst your contacts, even Institutions.

**8** Show on Facebook any small action you did and share with others to spread news about what is going on at your organization .

**9** Take some calculated risks while investing your scared financial resources for community actions with volunteers.

**10** Look always for alternative financial sources Banks, private enterprises, local social groups.

**11** Enhance your networking including other social and economical sectors looking for support and coherence.

**1** Funding is important but friendship and working together is even more important.

**2** Creativity, innovation and perseverance are key factors to face financial crisis.

**3** Commitment of a core group could lead a positive change

**4** Never lose hope; start from small and little by little you will get your target.

**5** If one door is closed, a window will be opened.

**12** Approach local media: alternative, digital or traditional and try to get the best of them to promote your project.

**13** Make a plan or at least have a list of priorities before acting towards getting your outcomes.

**14** Keep track of your little achievements to rapport later on.

## LESSONS LEARNED

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Please check the [website](#) or our [facebook](#) page.

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