

**STRAIT OF SICILY (SoS) SURVEY**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**- Habitat Conservation Survey -**

**Goal and Scope**

Thank you for participating in this survey. The purpose of this survey is to understand your willingness to pay for habitat conservation in the Strait of Sicily (SoS).

The SoS is identified as one of the main important Mediterranean area able to provide multiple Ecosystem Services that support human life at all scales, from local to global. Ecosystem services are the benefits people obtain from ecosystems, such as food, water, coastal protection, climate mitigation. However, stressors and anthropogenic pressures are degrading the SoS habitats, posing serious risks in the ability to provide benefits, undermining human well-being. CNR is examining integrity and complexity of SoS. As part of the project this survey has been launched to find out more on what people knows about condition of SoS and what audience thinks about the habitat conservation in the SoS.

Your responses will be anonymous and used for research purposes. Please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge and ability. There is no right or wrong answer, we just want your honest opinion.

**Consent to data processing:**

I consent to participate in this survey (Please tick box to proceed]

## **Section 1) confidence and awareness about the biodiversity conservation in the Strait of Sicily**

**1** Do you know about the SoS and its importance in providing ecosystem services (benefits for humans)?

(Yes/No)

**2** How aware are you of the threats and challenges faced by SoS?

Scale: Not aware at all,  
Somewhat aware,  
Moderately aware,  
Very aware,  
Extremely aware

**3** How would you rate your knowledge about the threatened habitat and species in the SoS?

Scale: Very Low,  
Low,  
Moderate,  
High,  
Very High

**4** How concerned are you about the Habitat Conservation in the Strait of Sicily?

Scale: Not concerned at all,  
Slightly concerned,  
Moderately concerned,  
Very concerned,  
Extremely concerned

**5** Do you think habitat conservation is important for maintaining the ecosystem services supply?

(Yes/No)

**6** What specific actions do you believe should be taken to conserve habitat and species?

Rank in order of effectiveness, with 1 being the most effective and 5 being the least effective

	1	2	3	4	5
Increasing marine protected areas					
Implement stricter regulations on fishing practices					
Promote certifications and labels for sustainable seafood					
Conducting research to better understand ecosystems					
Collaborate with local communities and stakeholders for conservation efforts					
Pollution control (wastewater, microplastics, and macroplastics, etc.)					
Decrease in oil and gas extraction activities					
Halt wind farm installations					
Monitoring of fish farming					
Reduce maritime traffic					
Port activities control					
Education programs to raise citizen awareness					

**7** What benefits do you believe habitat conservation can provide?

Select one or more answers:

- increase in biodiversity
- increase in fishing
- increase in tourism
- climate regulation
- coastal protection
- better water quality
- psychological well-being
- improvement in quality of life

- recreational activities
- oxygen production
- physical well-being
- economic well-being
- other

**8** Have you ever participated in any activities or initiatives related to marine conservation?

- Yes, I have actively participated
- No, but I would like to participate in the future
- No, and I am not interested in participating

**9** On the basis of the previous question, indicate any activities undertaken

Select one or more answers:

- beach waste collection
- marine waste collection
- awareness campaigns
- citizen science
- environmental monitoring
- net collection
- other

## **Section 2: Perceptions about habitat conservation efforts and their level of effectiveness**

**10** Do you think are human activities degrading SoS habitat?

(Yes/No)

**11** If yes, what are the main activities threatening the habitats of the Strait of Sicily in your perception?

Select one or more answers:

- illegal fishing
- overexploitation of fish stocks
- sewage discharge
- wind farms
- oil and gas extraction
- plastic
- toxic waste
- boating
- maritime traffic
- cleaning of cargo ship tanks
- river pollution (waste and chemicals used by agricultural companies, industries, or citizens that reach the sea from the river)

- anchoring
- pollutants from the terrestrial environment
- other

**12** On a scale of 1 to 5 how effective do you believe current habitat conservation efforts have been in the SoS?

1 = Not effective at all, 5 = Extremely effective

**13** According to the previous question, indicate the conservation efforts implemented in the Strait of Sicily.

Rank the answers in order of effectiveness, where 1 is the least effective and 5 the most effective:

	1	2	3	4	5
beach waste collection					
marine waste collection					
clean-up of polluted areas					
river cleaning and management					
trawling deterrents					
monitoring of illegal discharges					
sewage management plans					
fishing regulation					
illegal fishing control					
increase in protected marine areas					
restricted fishing zones					
maritime traffic control					
actions of environmental/non-governmental organizations					
combating illegal construction on the coast					
efficiency of control bodies					

**14** Do you think there should be stricter regulations in the SoS to protect marine biodiversity?

(Yes/No)

**15** In your opinion, should the government take the lead in funding and implementing habitat conservation efforts, or should it be a collaborative effort involving various stakeholders?

Select one or more answers:

- Government
- Associations
- Local communities
- Associations + local communities

- Government + associations + local communities (collaborative approach)

**16** Businesses and industries operating in or near the Strait of Sicily benefit from goods and services provided by the marine ecosystem while generating environmental impacts. According to this consideration, do you believe that businesses should contribute financially to the conservation of the Strait of Sicily?

(Yes/No)

**17** The results of this survey will provide information to the authorities such that they can make decisions whether to implement strategies to conserve habitat in SoS. Do you think the results from this survey will impact the authorities' decisions?

- Highly agree,
- Agree,
- Neither agree or disagree,
- Disagree,
- Highly disagree,
- Don't know

### **Section 3: Willingness to Pay for Habitat Conservation in the SoS**

Considering that degraded ecosystems negatively affect human survival, in this section we invite you to consider the willingness to pay for habitat conservation in the SoS as a means of ensuring the well-being of local and non-local communities.

**18** Would you be willing to support continuous and sustained funding for the protection and conservation of the Strait of Sicily?

(Yes, No)

**19** In accordance with the previous question, how would you respond to the following statements.

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree	I don't know
I would pay to support habitat conservation fund financed by my						

x5000 tax contribution option						
I would pay to support habitat conservation fund financed by increased tax						
I would pay to support habitat conservation project						
I would participate in a crowdfunding campaign towards a local habitat conservation project						
I am not willing to pay						

**20** Bearing in mind the importance or unimportance of the habitat conservation in the SoS; would you be prepared to pay €(4, 8, 10, 15, 20, 30) per year for the next 10 years to ensure a conservation plan in the SoS?

(Only one euro figure used in each case)

**21** If you indicated that you were not willing to pay the amount presented in the previous question, what was your main reason for doing so?

Select one answer:

- I cannot afford to pay
- I object to paying taxes
- Habitat conservation is not important to me
- The Government/Council/Other Authority should pay out of its current budget

#### **Section 4: socio-demographic information**

In order to provide us with a profile of the people who have participated in this survey and to make sure that those we are surveying are from a wide range of backgrounds, I'm going to ask you some general questions about yourself. All of the information will be kept anonymous and confidential.

**22** Place of the interview

**23** What is your age?

- Under 18 years old,
- 18-24 years old,
- 25-34 years old,
- 35-44 years old,
- 45-54 years old,
- 55-64 years old,
- 65 years or older

**24** What is your gender?

- Male,
- Female,
- Non-binary,
- Prefer not to say

**25** What is your highest level of education?

- High school or below,
- College/University degree,
- Postgraduate degree

**26** What is your marital status?

- Married,
- Living with partner,
- Single,
- Separated/divorced/widowed,
- Do not wish to disclose

**27** Do you have any children?

Yes/No

**28** Are you or anyone in your household a member of an environmental organisation?

- You,
- Family Member,
- Nobody

**29** Can you please indicate your current work status?

- full-time worker (30+ hours per week)
- part-time worker (18-29 hours per week)
- part-time worker (17 or fewer hours per week)
- student
- homemaker



- retired
- unemployed
- unable to work due to illness or disability
- other

**30** Could you please indicate the number that best describes your total gross personal income per year (whether from employment, pensions, state benefits, investments or any other sources) before deduction of tax.

- Less than €10,000,
- €10,001 – 20,000,
- €20,001 – 30,000,
- €30,001 – 40,000,
- €40,001 – 50,000,
- €50,001 - 60,000,
- €60,001 - 70,000,
- €70,001 - 80,000,
- More than €80,000,
- Refused to answer