

Beat: Travel

## The Spanish Government proposes inclusion as LIC Southeast Canarias

### It will protect 8% of the seas

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**USPA NEWS** - Spanish government has taken another step towards the full protection of the marine environment with its request to the European Commission for inclusion in the list of Sites of Community Importance of the Natura 2000 network space Space Marine ESZZ15002 east and south of Lanzarote-Fuerteventura.

The Government's proposal provides information on the geographic boundaries, surface and values proposed by the marine space and includes a system of preventive protection until this space is designated by the European Commission as LIC. With this proposal, Spain will increase the Natura 2000 marine surface area more than 14,000 km<sup>2</sup>, getting 8% of its oceans are protected. Spain, therefore approaches the target set by the Convention on Biological Diversity to protect 10% of marine areas by 2020.

In addition, many natural values are protected, including habitats of Directive 92/43 / EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, such as reefs and banks permanently covered by shallow seawater and endangered species such as the loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*) and a variety of species of cetaceans such as the bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), sperm whales, beaked whales and fin whales, among other.

This proposal to include the marine space Lanzarote Fuerteventura in the Natura 2000 network reached after an exhaustive study of the area under the LIFE + INDEMARES "Inventory and designation of Natura 2000 marine areas of Spanish State", coordinated by the Biodiversity Foundation and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and the Environment Spanish, partner by the Spanish Institute of Oceanography, the Higher Council for Scientific Research, ALNITAK, the Coordinator for the Study of Marine Mammals, OCEANA, the Society for the Study of Cetaceans in the Canary Archipelago, SEO / BirdLife and WWF Spain.

When this area was selected in 2009 to join the project INDEMARES "South Fuerteventura" was called and was established primarily to study the habitat of community interest 1170 "Reefs" in submarine banks "Banquet" and "Amanay" and species pelagic marine turtles and cetaceans. A preliminary study of the responsible entity in this area of study of cetaceans (SECAC) determined the presence of cetaceans in the wider east of the islands of Lanzarote and Fuerteventura area, which in 2011 was notified to the European Commission extension of the study area, which was renamed "Marine area in east and south of Lanzarote-Fuerteventura".

The purpose of this new space as LIC is a milestone for the conservation of biodiversity in Spain, especially for the development and expansion of the Natura 2000 network in the marine environment, in which the number of spaces and the protected surface is much lower the terrestrial domain. This proposal is in addition to nine other LIC and the declaration of 39 Special Protection Areas for Birds approved in 2014, "fruit of the great effort made by the ministry to comply with the obligations arising from international conventions, Community law and its legal system, and demonstrate its firm commitment to the protection of the marine environment, "the government said in a statement.

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