



Red List of

# Mediterranean Mammals



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## Key facts

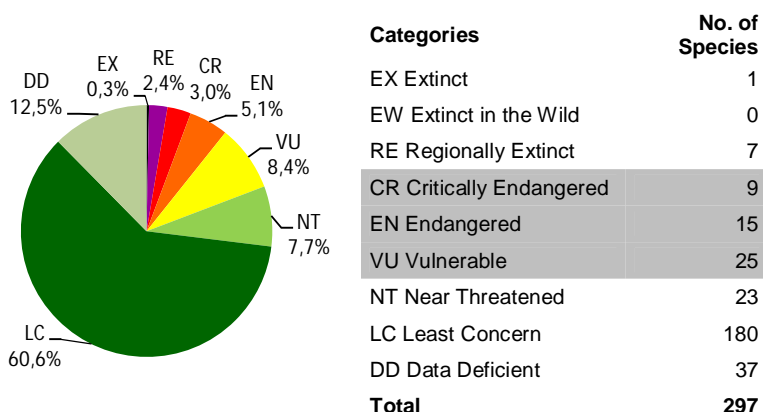
- ❑ 320 mammal species (excluding cetaceans) occur, as native or naturalized before 1500 A.D., in the Mediterranean basin countries. The majority of these are small volant and non-volant mammals (rodents, bats, shrews, hedgehogs and moles), with the largest family being the Muridae (rats and mice). Only 297 have been assessed in this report.
- ❑ Currently, more than 16% (49 species) of the assessed mammal species in the Mediterranean basin are threatened with extinction. The percentage is particularly high for ungulates, primates, carnivores and lagomorphs (rabbits and hares). Eight species, all belonging to the mentioned groups, have disappeared from the region due to human activities. One of these, the Sardinia Pika *Prolagus sardus*, was unique to the Mediterranean and globally extinct since 1500 A.D.
- ❑ The level of endemism in the region is quite high with 89 species (a 30% of the species) being unique to the Mediterranean basin. Their concentration is particularly high in the Maghreb, Iberian and Italian peninsulas.
- ❑ Destruction and degradation of habitats, caused by a variety of factors including agricultural intensification, urbanization, pollution, and climate change, is the greatest threat to Mediterranean mammals. As a result, more than one-quarter (27%) of Mediterranean mammals have declining populations, 31% are stable, while for a further 40% the population trend is unknown; only 3% of species populations are increasing.
- ❑ Effective conservation action needs to focus not just on species but also on sites in wider landscapes, considering the heterogeneous and dynamic nature of large territories on which the survival of species depends.

The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™



# Conservation Status Assessment

Out of the 297 species assessed in the Mediterranean basin, 16.5% are considered threatened, with 3% Critically Endangered, 5% Endangered and 8% Vulnerable. A further 8% is assessed as Near Threatened and a 12% is considered to be Data Deficient. One species, the Sardinian Pika *Prolagus sardus*, has become globally extinct since 1500 A.D. and a further seven species, including the Lion *Panthera leo* and Tiger *P. tigris* have been extirpated from the region.



## Main Threats

The greatest threat to Mediterranean mammals is destruction and degradation of habitats, caused by a variety of factors including agricultural intensification, urbanization, pollution, and climate change. Moreover, desertification and decreased availability of water is already a major problem in drier areas and their severity is set to increase in the future. Human disturbance, overexploitation and invasive species are also major threats.

## Conservation Actions

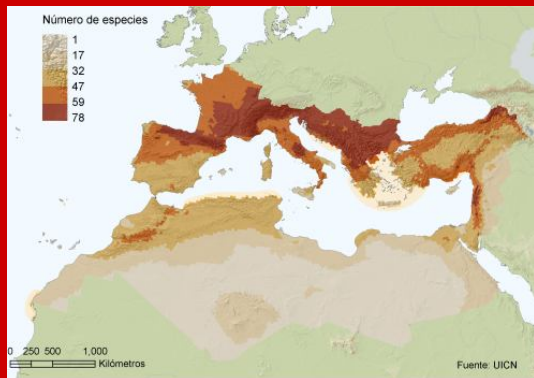
Conservation measures to be recommended vary between the different groups:

- For **bats** it is necessary to improve the legal protection framework (enforcing existing legislation) and to encourage more environmentally friendly practices in agriculture and in buildings restoring.
- For **non-volant** (flightless) **small mammals** it is recommended to develop more sustainable agricultural practices to prevent habitat loss and degradation, to enforce existing legal measures preventing the introduction of alien invasive species (such as the American Mink *Neovison vison*), and to adopt measures to raise public awareness.
- For **large mammals**: to improve management of protected areas and of the wider environment; to enforce existing laws and regulations controlling hunting; to develop and implement species-specific management plans for the most threatened species.

Further research should be encouraged especially towards the species actually assessed as Data Deficient.

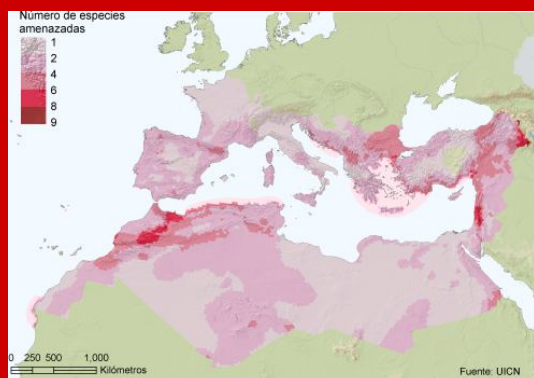
## Species richness

Terrestrial mammal biodiversity is higher in mountainous parts of the region, with particularly high concentrations of threatened species found in the mountains of Turkey, the Levant, and north-west Africa. Although the Sahara has relatively low species richness, a high proportion of Saharan species are threatened.



Species richness of mammals in the Mediterranean basin

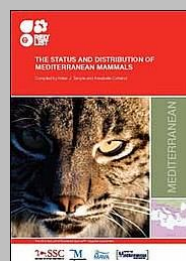
Of the 49 Mediterranean mammals threatened species, 20 (41%) are unique to the region. Endemic species richness is particularly high in the Maghreb, although the Iberian and Italian peninsulas also hold important concentrations of endemic species, as do the Mediterranean islands.



Species richness of threatened mammals in the Mediterranean basin

## For more information

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### The Status and Distribution of Mediterranean Mammals

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