



Legal status

Protected under the Ramsar Wetlands Convention

Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Special Protected Area (SPA)

Camargue Natural Regional Park

Property of Conservatoire du littoral



Etangs et marais des salins de Camargue

Eurosite Factsheet
Wetlands and Climate Change
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Camargue - Southern France



An extended coastal area owned by Conservatoire du littoral, covering a surface area of 6,500 ha of former saltworks, coastal lagoons, sand dunes and marshes, located along the Camargue coastline, Sud Provence Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Southern France.

Management of the Protected Area

Since purchased by Conservatoire du littoral (2008-2012), the site has been jointly managed by Parc naturel régional de Camargue, Tour du Valat, and Société nationale de protection de la nature. Five focus areas have been defined for the site: to restore a natural hydrology, to restore coastal ecosystems, to maintain the site capacity for breeding colonial water birds, to implement an adaptive management approach to sea level rise (controlled coastal retreat), and to integrate economic issues such as offering opportunities for sustainable tourism from the nearby village Salin de Giraud.

Issues and challenges

Wetland restoration has focused on hydraulic works aimed at improving the balance between salt and fresh water and restoring hydrological and biological connections between the former saltworks and surrounding subwatersheds, including the coastal lagoons of the nearby Réserve naturelle de Camargue.

Another aspiration is to turn the former saltworks into a buffer zone to adapt the Rhône delta to the effects of sea level rise induced by climate change. Embankments along the coastline are no longer maintained, re-enabling natural water connections between the sea and the former saltworks.

Other challenges include encouraging the local stakeholders to take ownership of the rewilding process.



Habitats and species protected

- 22 habitats under Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive, including Coastal lagoons, Mediterranean salt steppes, Mediterranean halophilous scrubs, Crucianellion maritimae fixed beach dunes, and Humid dune slacks
- 15 breeding bird species under Annex 1 of the Birds Directive, including the Greater Flamingo, Slender-billed Gull, Gull-billed Tern and Kentish Plover
- Coastal lagoons constitute nursery habitats for migrant fish including the critically endangered European eel



Information and videos

Further information:

<https://tourduvalat.org/en/actions/gestion-adaptative-etangs-marais-salins-de-camargue/>

Recommended video:

<https://vimeo.com/255004511>