

# CONSERVATION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN TORTOISE, *TESTUDO HERMANNI HERMANNI*, IN CATALONIA

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## INTRODUCTION

### Protection legislation:

**Europe:** Annex II Habitat directive → Community interest species  
**Spain:** Royal Decrees 439/1990, 1997/1995 (Annex IV), 1193/1998 (Annex II)  
**Catalonia:** Laws 3/88 and 12/2006 of the Government of Catalonia (Annex II)

### IUCN Category:

**Worldwide:** Almost endangered NT  
**Spain:** Endangered (EN), recently catalogued as a species in danger of extinction

### Threats to survival:

#### Effect on habitat:

Human interference → Habitat loss and degradation  
 Forest fires

#### Effect on individuals:

Collecting for pet trade  
 Predation

## OBJECTIVES

The aims of this work were:

- To determine the current status of the Hermann tortoise (*Testudo hermanni hermanni*) in Catalonia
- To see what specific programmes for management and conservation are being conducted in the Catalan territory
- To assess which measures are in operation, evaluate their effectiveness and make suggestions to improve them

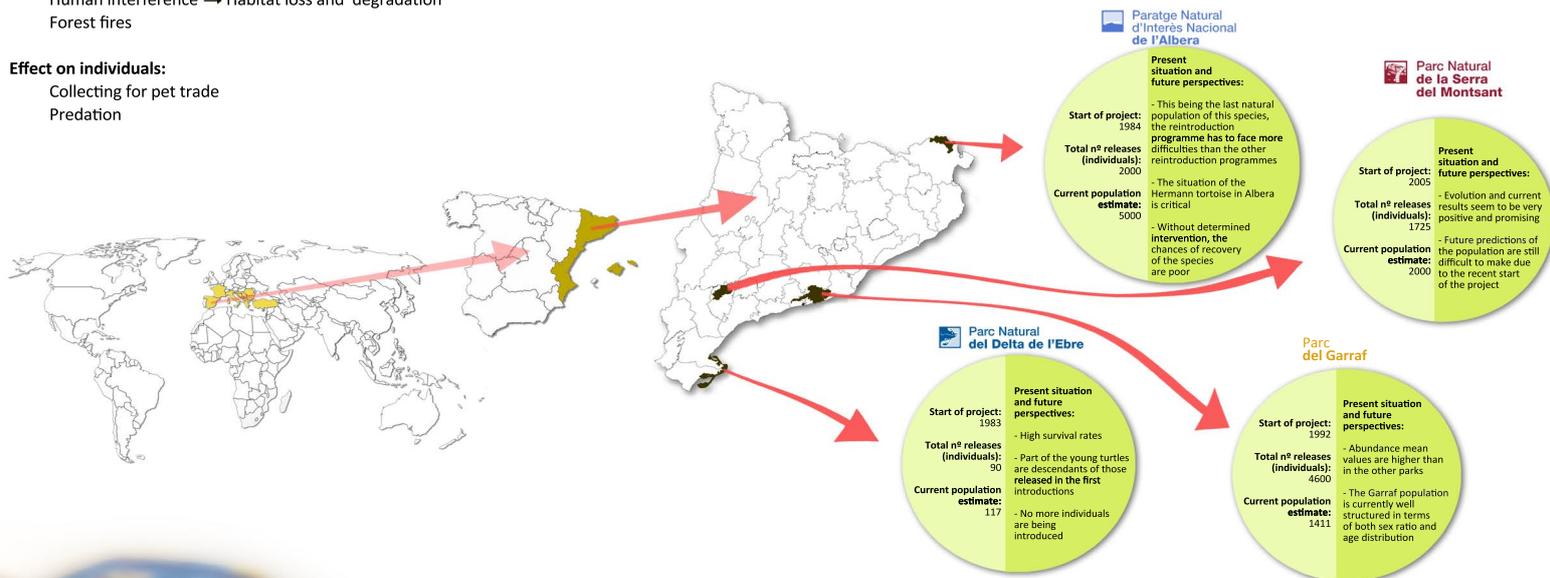
## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### 1. Literature search

- Articles
- Technical reports
- Books

### 2. Interviews

- Ebro Delta
- Montsant (C.R.A.R.C.)
- Albera (C.R.T.)
- Garraf



## DISCUSSIONS

Given the critical situation of *Testudo hermanni hermanni* in Catalonia, intervention and breeding in captivity are needed:

### 1. Management and habitat protection:

- Pla especial de protecció del territori
- Pla de recuperació de la tortuga mediterrània a Catalunya
- Xarxa de Custòdia del territori
- PNIN

### 2. Dealing with wildfire

- Fire prevention
- Post-fire alternative measures
- Pla d'incendis forestals

### 3. Plunder and predation control

- Stricter and unified regulations

### 4. Awareness programmes

- Increase awareness of the plight of this species
- Greater funding

### 5. Introduction and reintroduction programmes

- Primary objective: ensure survival of existing populations
- Creation of more populations within the natural and historical distribution area of the species
- Methodological standardization and more coordination between programmes
- Ecotype *Països Catalans* makes reintroductions in Albera difficult
- Enhance participation on the part of private collaborators
- Detailed monitoring of the population's evolution

## CONCLUSIONS

- The current *Testudo hermanni hermanni* populations in Catalonia are in good condition, with exception of the last natural population in Serra de l'Albera.

- We must continue working on the conservation of this species and combat major threats to its survival; otherwise all management measures will be insufficient.

- Greater coordination between the centres would allow a better understanding of the species and facilitate the comparison of results, as well as an improvement in future actions.

- More legislative support is needed in order to continue protecting the Hermann tortoise from extinction.

