

# 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)

### UICN 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:

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

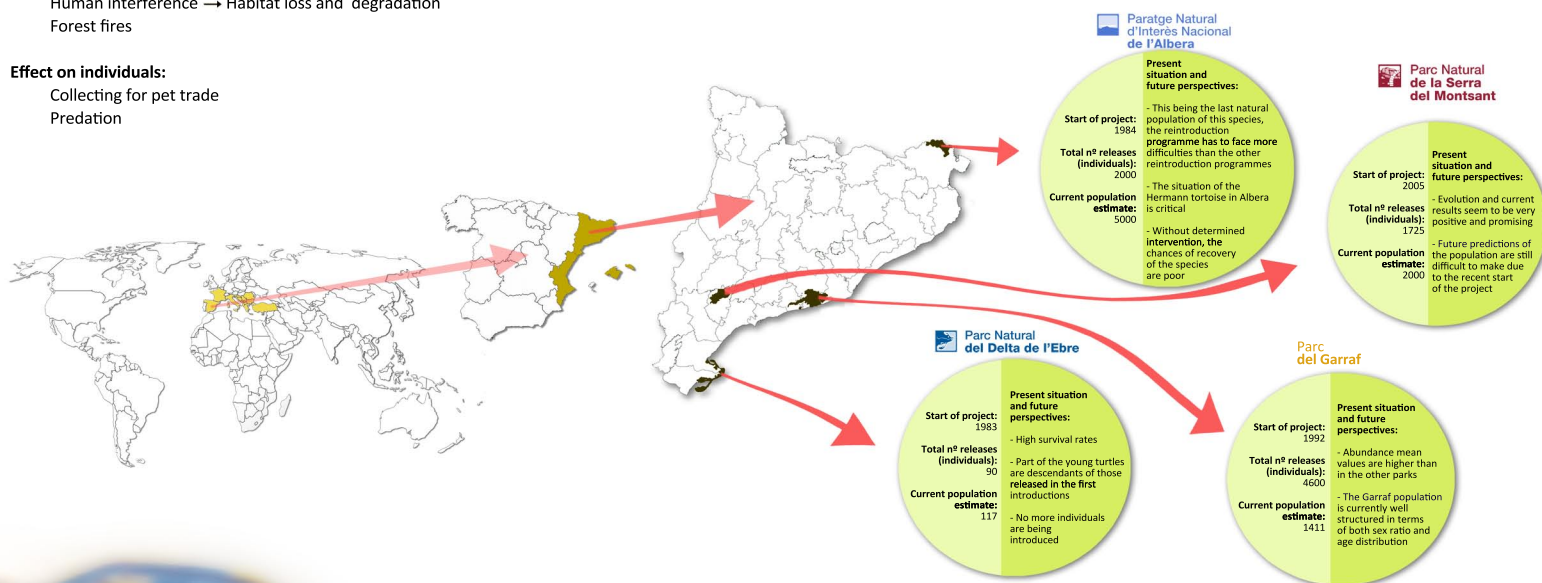
## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### 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.