

2.4 Sitelength [km]:

0.0

2.5 Administrative region code and name

NUTS level 2 code

Region Name

MTZZ	Extra-Regio
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2.6 Biogeographical Region(s)

Marine (100.0

Mediterranean %)

3. ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION

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3.1 Habitat types present on the site and assessment for them

Annex I Habitat types						Site assessment			
Code	PF	NP	Cover [ha]	Cave [number]	Data quality	A B C D	A B C		
						Representativity	Relative Surface	Conservation	Global
1110 B			33.52		M	B	A	A	B
1120 B			5011.68		M	A	A	B	B
1170 B			84.44		M	B	C	B	B
8330 B				64	G	B	A	B	B

- **PF:** for the habitat types that can have a non-priority as well as a priority form (6210, 7130, 9430) enter "X" in the column PF to indicate the priority form.
- **NP:** in case that a habitat type no longer exists in the site enter: x (optional)
- **Cover:** decimal values can be entered
- **Caves:** for habitat types 8310, 8330 (caves) enter the number of caves if estimated surface is not available.
- **Data quality:** G = 'Good' (e.g. based on surveys); M = 'Moderate' (e.g. based on partial data with some extrapolation); P = 'Poor' (e.g. rough estimation)

3.2 Species referred to in Article 4 of Directive 2009/147/EC and listed in Annex II of Directive 92/43/EEC and site evaluation for them

Species					Population in the site						Site assessment			
G	Code	Scientific Name	S	NP	T	Size		Unit	Cat.	D. qual.	A B C D	A B C		
						Min	Max				Pop.	Con.	Iso.	Glo.
R	1224	Caretta caretta							P	DD	C	C	C	C
I	2578	Gibbula nivosa	Yes		p	600	600	i	V	G	C	B	C	B

- **Group:** A = Amphibians, B = Birds, F = Fish, I = Invertebrates, M = Mammals, P = Plants, R = Reptiles
- **S:** in case that the data on species are sensitive and therefore have to be blocked for any public access enter: yes
- **NP:** in case that a species is no longer present in the site enter: x (optional)
- **Type:** p = permanent, r = reproducing, c = concentration, w = wintering (for plant and non-migratory species use permanent)
- **Unit:** i = individuals, p = pairs or other units according to the Standard list of population units and codes in accordance with Article 12 and 17 reporting (see [reference portal](#))
- **Abundance categories (Cat.):** C = common, R = rare, V = very rare, P = present - to fill if data are deficient (DD) or in addition to population size information
- **Data quality:** G = 'Good' (e.g. based on surveys); M = 'Moderate' (e.g. based on partial data with some extrapolation); P = 'Poor' (e.g. rough estimation); VP = 'Very poor' (use this category only, if not even a rough estimation of the population size can be made, in this case the fields for population size can remain empty, but the field "Abundance categories" has to be filled in)

3.3 Other important species of flora and fauna (optional)

4. SITE DESCRIPTION

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4.1 General site character

Habitat class	% Cover
N01	100.0
Total Habitat Cover	100

Other Site Characteristics

This coastal site is relatively large when considering Malta. Justification for this is based on the SLOSS (Single Large Or Several Small sites) debate on site design. Contrary to several small sites, a single large site has low edge effect, affords better protection to organisms with large area requirements and is easier to manage. Moreover this approach is also in line with the suggested ecological coherence necessary for better conserving Natura 2000 sites. The seabed geomorphology in the site is considerably heterogeneous giving rise to a number of varied seascapes, bottom types and a number of different habitat types.

4.2 Quality and importance

This area hosts the largest variety of Posidonia sub-types when considering the marine sites selected to form part of the Natura 2000 Network, with the representativity of each being considered superior. The subtypes present in this site are the following: Posidonia settled on matte, whose meadows are normally continuous and having a high density; Posidonia settled on rock, showing a reticulate distribution of dense strands; Posidonia settled on sand, with continuous beds generally showing low densities and variable percentage cover; Mosaic morphology, intermixed between Posidonia oceanica, Cymodocea nodosa and coarse sand, showing a reticulate structure; Ecomorphosis of 'barrier reef' Posidonia meadows. The Posidonia meadows within this site are also known for a high degree of connectivity, as well as percentage coverage. It is evident that the Posidonia meadows in various parts of this site are very abundant and healthy. They are dense and show a high degree of shoot density, particularly in White Tower Bay, which appears to host probably the highest shoot density in the Mediterranean. Sandbanks, formed by associations of Cymodocea nodosa are also present within this site. The following subtypes are present: Sandbanks with associations of Cymodocea nodosa on well-sorted fine sands; Sandbanks with associations of Cymodocea nodosa on superficially muddy sands in sheltered waters; Facies with Cymodocea nodosa occurring within coarse sands and gravels with more or less mud. Reefs have also been identified within this site, occurring on hard beds and rocks. The following subtypes occur within this site: Reefs with associations of Dictyopteris polypodioides; Reefs with associations of Halopteris scoparis and Padina pavonica; Reefs with associations of Flabellia petiolata and Peyssonellia squamaria; Reefs with associations of Cystoseira spp. Partially submerged caves are also present, mostly located along the coast of Comino. No quantitative data is available for this habitat type. Amongst the important species within this site is Lithothamnion minervae, a species which has been included in national legislation as a plant species of national interest whose conservation requires the designation of Special Areas of Conservation. Note: This site was proposed as an SCI in 2010, confirmed as an SCI in 2012 and was then extended in 2018.

4.3 Threats, pressures and activities with impacts on the site

The most important impacts and activities with high effect on the site

Negative Impacts			
Rank	Threats and pressures [code]	Pollution (optional) [code]	inside/outside [i o b]
L	I01		b
M	H03.03		b
M	F02.01		b
M	G01		i
L	G02.10		b
L	M02.01		b
L	K01.01		i
L	A07		i
M	F02.02		b
L	M01.01		b
L	I03		b
L	D03.02		b
M	F02.03		b
L	J02		i
L	F01		i
L	A08		i

Positive Impacts			
Rank	Activities, management [code]	Pollution (optional) [code]	inside /outside [i o b]

Rank: H = high, M = medium, L = low

Pollution: N = Nitrogen input, P = Phosphor/Phosphate input, A = Acid input/acidification,

T = toxic inorganic chemicals, O = toxic organic chemicals, X = Mixed pollutions
i = inside, o = outside, b = both

4.4 Ownership (optional)

4.5 Documentation

5. SITE PROTECTION STATUS (optional)

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level:

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5.2 Relation of the described site with other sites:

5.3 Site designation (optional)

6. SITE MANAGEMENT

6.1 Body(ies) responsible for the site management:

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Organisation:	Environment and Resources Authority
Address:	
Email:	natura.2000@era.org.mt

6.2 Management Plan(s):

An actual management plan does exist:

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, but in preparation
<input type="checkbox"/> No

6.3 Conservation measures (optional)

7. MAP OF THE SITES

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INSPIRE ID:

Map delivered as PDF in electronic format (optional)

Yes No

Reference(s) to the original map used for the digitalisation of the electronic boundaries (optional).