

2.4 Sitelength [km]:

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

3.1 Habitat types present on the site and assessment for them

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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
1170B			712.69		G	A	B	B	B
8330B				7	G	B	B	B	A

- **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				0	180	i	C	G	B	A	C	A
M	1349	Tursiops truncatus				0	79	i	P	G	C	B	B	C

- **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

Depths recorded at this site varies from 550 m to approximately 2000 m. A long plateau extends along the southern edge of the area. Steep escarpments drop to depths exceeding 600 m over a horizontal distance of ca. 250 m at the western extent of the plateau, and to depths of ca. 230 m at the eastern side of the plateau.

4.2 Quality and importance

The site hosts a concentration of *Caretta caretta* population as identified by the LIFE Migrate project (LIFE11 NAT/MT1070). The average density for Malta is between 0.4 to 7.2 specimens per square kilometre. The area likely serves as a migratory corridor and foraging site for this species, with a higher occupancy by juveniles and sub-adults although more scientific evidence would be required to confirm this. *Tursiops truncatus* is present in all waters around Malta at a rather uniform distribution. Clearly identifiable areas representing the physical and biological factors essential to the life and reproduction of the *Tursiops truncatus* have not been found through the scientific surveys carried out by Malta so far, also as part of the LIFE Migrate project (LIFE11 NAT/MT1070). Regarding caves, no detailed information on the assemblages found in deep-water caves is recorded since it is not possible for an ROV to enter into the caves. When present, sessile species at the mouth of the caves are the same as those associated with the adjacent reef escarpment (see below), while some mobile species that are also typical of deep-water reefs, particularly the shrimps *Plesionika* spp., are observed in some of the caves. Reef assemblages present along escarpments and associated with the fossil lithistid reef in Offshore Area IV are characterised by a variety of sessile cnidarians and sponges, but no single species is dominant. The more abundant habitat formers include *Bebryce mollis*, *Chironophthya mediterranea*, *Paramuricea macrospina* and *Swiftia pallida*, while *Callogorgia verticillata*, *Leiopathes glaberrima*, *Hexadella dedritifera*, *Reteporella* sp. and *Stenocyathus vermiformis* are also noted in several instances, together with other bryozoans, sponges and cnidarians; the precious red coral *Corallium rubrum* was also present. A high diversity of associated fauna (especially sponges, echinoderms, molluscs, crustaceans and fish), including one individual of the long-spined sea urchin *Centrostephanus longispinus*, are also present. Sedimentary bottoms in the vicinity of the reefs include the cnidarian *Funiculina quadrangularis*. The information on caves and reefs was gathered through the LIFE BaHAR for N2K project (LIFE12NAT/MT/000845). Note: An extensive area of this site was initially proposed as an SCI in 2016 (MT0000106), together with an SPA; following an extension in 2018 of the SCI (confirmed in 2017), MT0000106 was retained as an SPA, while the SCI with the extended area given the site code MT0000115.

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	M02.03		b
L	D03.02		b
L	M02.01		b
L	H03.03		b
L	F02.01		b
L	M01.01		b
L	F02.03		b
L	M02.02		b
M	F02.02		b

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).