



# **5MPCW CY-2025**

## **5<sup>TH</sup> MEDITERRANEAN PLANT CONSERVATION WEEK**

**Building alliances for plant diversity conservation  
in the Mediterranean**

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Editors

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**BOOK OF ABSTRACTS**

## Restoring the priority habitat “Coastal dunes with *Juniperus* spp.” in Portugal, conservation practices in the Zimbral for LIFE project

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The priority habitat 2250\* - Coastal dunes with *Juniperus* spp. - is an extremely vulnerable habitat, that occupies a limited ecological space, that is very attractive to some economic sectors, especially tourism, forestry and agriculture. In Portugal this habitat is constituted by two juniper species: *Juniperus turbinata* Guss., a species distributed throughout the mediterranean basin, and *Juniperus navicularis* Gand., an Iberian endemism, with more than 95% of his populations located in Portuguese territory. Despite its importance and protection status, this habitat has been for a long time subjected to several pressures and threats that led to its degradation. As a result, is classified with the conservation status unfavourable-inadequate in Portugal – and in the Mediterranean as a whole – with a decreasing trend (2250\* in Habitat Directive 92/43/CEE). Thus, to improve this habitat conservation status in Portugal, Zimbral for LIFE was created.

The Zimbral for LIFE project addresses the main factors that are preventing the improvement of the habitat's ecological condition. The project acts on local and national scales. Locally, with three intervention areas, distributed along the southwest coast of Portugal, in three Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) – Comporta-Galé, Costa Sudoeste and Ria Formosa/Castro Marim. After identifying the main pressures on this habitat at the areas, interventions were and are being implemented. These consist of the removal of exotic and invasive species (*Acacia* spp. and *Carpobrotus edulis*), reduction of the pine cover, improvement of juniper populations and other species of 2250\* habitat and, from contiguous habitats, through sowing and transplant of young seedlings. At national level, covering all SACs in mainland Portugal where the habitat occurs, the project aims to improve knowledge as well as communication and dissemination work in order to develop a national conservation plan for this priority habitat.

**Keywords:** Ecological restoration, National action plan, Mediterranean flora, Sand dune junipers, Special Area of Conservation