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# Coralligenous and maërl habitats: predictive modelling to identify their spatial distributions across the Mediterranean Sea

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Bioconstructions such as coralligenous outcrops and maërl beds are typical Mediterranean underwater seascapes. Fine-scale knowledge on the distribution of these sensitive habitats is crucial for their effective management and conservation. In the present study, a thorough review of existing spatial datasets showing the distribution of coralligenous and maërl habitats across the Mediterranean Sea was undertaken, highlighting current gaps in knowledge. Predictive modelling was then carried out, based on environmental predictors, to produce the first continuous maps of these two habitats across the entire basin. These predicted occurrence maps for coralligenous outcrops and maërl beds provide critical information about where the two habitats are most likely to occur. The collated occurrence data and derived distribution model outputs can help addressing the challenge of developing basin-wide spatial plans and to guide cost-effective future surveys and monitoring efforts towards areas that are presently poorly-sampled.