



RÉPUBLIQUE  
FRANÇAISE

*Liberté  
Égalité  
Fraternité*



**OFB**  
OFFICE FRANÇAIS  
DE LA BIODIVERSITÉ

# A new public institution, a new force for biodiversity



# Using knowledge to promote biodiversity

## ENHANCED SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

The role of the French Biodiversity Agency (OFB) is to develop knowledge and scientific expertise about species, habitats, the services provided by biodiversity and the threats it faces. It coordinates national information systems on biodiversity, water and both aquatic and marine habitats. It collects, structures and disseminates information gathered by numerous public and non-governmental partners.

The Agency supports or runs many applied research projects. Based on these studies and experiments, it produces compendia of knowledge and methodological guides of great value

to the managers of natural areas, local authorities, businesses and planners. Thanks to its expertise, the Agency contributes to developing and implementing European directives, action plans and management strategies on national issues, such as: monitoring and managing protected species; supervising and assessing the status of natural habitats; creating and managing protected areas; developing habitat restoration, ecological engineering solutions; preventing, monitoring and managing invasive alien species; wildlife health monitoring; reducing various types of pollution; ecological continuities.

## OBSERVING AND CENSUSING BIODIVERSITY

- The Agency manages the **French National Biodiversity Observatory (ONB)** which designs and shares indicators on major issues relating to biodiversity (conservation status, pressures, etc.).
- Via “**Patrinat**” joint research unit steered by – **National Natural History Museum (MNHN)** - and **French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS)**, the Agency publishes the **National Natural Heritage Inventory (inpn.fr)**, a national portal providing data on species and habitats.
- By means of its **in-the-field services**, the Agency collects data throughout the entire French territory, on land and at sea concerning a broad range of subjects: **freshwater fish, marine birds and mammals, reduction in river flows, etc.**

# Mobilising society and promoting commitment

## THE FRENCH BIODIVERSITY AGENCY A CONTACT FOR ONE AND ALL



The role of the French Biodiversity Agency is to mobilise all society for biodiversity. To do this, it encourages and assists companies, local authori-

ties, non-governmental organisations, and users of nature to get involved at their level. The *Territoires Engagés pour la Nature* (Local and Regional Authorities committed to Nature) scheme helps local authorities implement specific action plans in favour of biodiversity, adapted to local issues. The *Entreprises Engagées pour la Nature* (Companies committed to Nature – Act4Nature France) scheme helps businesses take concrete, measurable actions with a positive effect on biodiversity.

More generally, the Agency coordinates citizen involvement, by launching numerous general public awareness, information, education and training initiatives. The aim is to raise awareness while encouraging citizens to take action in favour of biodiversity in their everyday lives. For example, the *AGIR* (ACT) platform features 52 daily actions to preserve biodiversity ([agir.biodiversitetousvivants.fr](http://agir.biodiversitetousvivants.fr)).

## MARINE AND TERRESTRIAL EDUCATIONAL AREAS

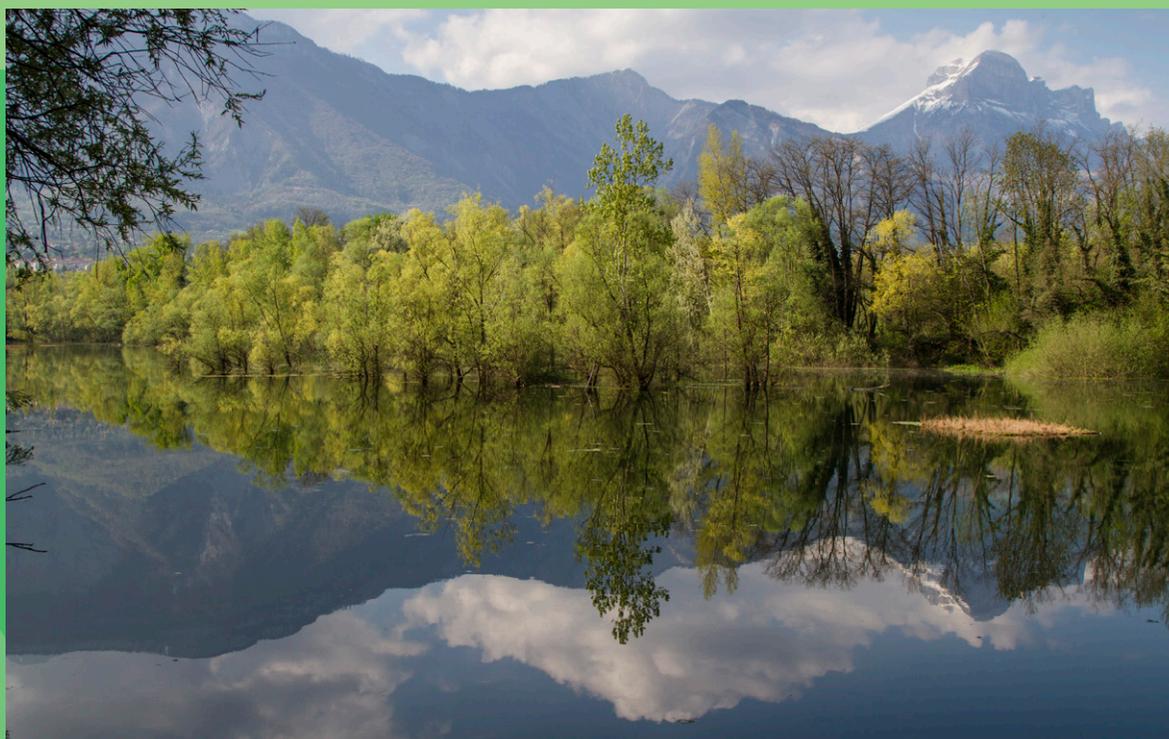
**They enable 4th, 5th and 6th grade pupils to explore a stretch of coastline, wetland, forest, river, urban park, etc. jointly with their teacher and an environmental education stakeholder. To date, more than 200 schools have implemented this approach, developed by the French Biodiversity Agency, in agreement with the ministries responsible for National Education, Ecology and the French Overseas Territories.**

# A new public State institution to protect and restore biodiversity

The French Biodiversity Agency was created on 1st January 2020\* to protect and restore biodiversity in Metropolitan France and its Overseas Territories. It is a public institution under the authority of the ministries responsible for Ecology and Agriculture & Food.

## 5 COMPLEMENTARY ROLES

- **Sharing knowledge, research and expertise about species, habitats and their uses**
- **Environmental and wildlife health policing**
- **Supporting the implementation of public policies**
- **Assisting and supporting protected natural area managers**
- **Supporting stakeholders and mobilising civil society.**



## PRESERVING BIODIVERSITY ALSO MEANS PRESERVING OURSELVES

Biodiversity is the planet's living tissue, the sum of interactions between species and their habitats. Essential to human societies, it supplies the oxygen in the air, food, water, energy, soil fertility, and numerous materials and medicaments. However, this biodiversity is in jeopardy. Species extinctions are accelerating due to pressure from human activities: destruction and fragmentation of natural habitats, pollution, over-exploitation of natural resources, introduction of invasive alien species, as well as climate changes.

## OFB FORCES

- **3,000 staff (including 1,900 within territorial entities in Metropolitan France and her Overseas)**
- **National and regional departments and their local units, whose actions are complementary and closely interlinked, established in Metropolitan France and her Overseas**
- **8 marine nature parks**
- **1 sanctuary for marine mammals**
- **26 nature reserves**

\*Law no. 2019-773 of 24 July 2019

# Combating damage to biodiversity

## STRENGTHENED ENVIRONMENTAL POLICING



compliance with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) on French territory. It also organises the hunting licence examination and issues the licence. In addition, the Agency plays a major role in the implementation of the *Éviter Réduire Compenser* (Avoid, Mitigate, Compensate) scheme. In the framework of development projects, the objective of this scheme is to avoid environmental damage, mitigate it if it cannot be avoided, and compensate it when it can neither be avoided nor mitigated.

To prevent and punish environmental damage, the 1,800 environmental inspectors of the French Biodiversity Agency provide their technical expertise, watch over the territory, raise user's awareness, detect and report offences, and take anti-poaching measures. These policing tasks cover: water; natural

areas; plants and wildlife (protected species, combatting trafficking); hunting (anti-poaching actions, improving hunting safety); fishing; policing wildlife health (avian flu, African swine fever, etc.).

The environmental inspector's policing powers have been strengthened. The Agency also oversees

compensate it when it can neither be avoided nor mitigated.

OFB's officers issue technical support to the State services on the potential impact of development projects subject to administrative authorisation and declaration. They ensure compliance on the part of the contracted parties.

## TRAFFICKING OF ENDANGERED WILDLIFE SPECIES

To combat the trafficking of endangered wild species, the CITES-Capture national intervention brigade oversees a network of specialised agents involved in all departments of the Agency in Metropolitan France and Overseas territories (OST). It is the only such organisation in Europe. Its officers deal with State prosecutors, the police, gendarmes, customs and the French Agency responsible for combating environmental and public health offences.



# Support for public policies and biodiversity stakeholders

## AT THE HEART OF NETWORKS, FROM LOCAL TO INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

The French Biodiversity Agency covers the entire territory, of Metropolitan France and Overseas France, from international to local level. With its strong territorial presence, it is at the heart of a network of biodiversity stakeholders which include local authorities, decentralised State services, companies, research organisations, non-governmental organisations, nature “users” and citizens.

The French Biodiversity Agency provides support to the 11 integrated national parks, as well as to the other protected natural areas managers, coordination of the technical network of marine protected areas managers and the “Conference” of French protected areas.

Furthermore, the Agency coordinates the 11 national botanical conservancies.

To address biodiversity protection issues in local territories, the Agency is involved in the creation and coordination of the network of regional biodiversity agencies, alongside the regions, water agencies and decentralised State services.

The Agency is also involved in numerous partnerships with local authorities, including *Territoires Engagés pour la Nature*, *Atlas de la biodiversité communale* and the training of elected representatives in biodiversity protection.

On the international stage, the French

Biodiversity Agency provides its expertise and know-how to the diplomatic corps and various institutions, develops international partnerships and supports the implementation of major multilateral environmental agreements and European directives.



**ECOPHYTO II+ PLAN**  
OFB is in charge of the national strand of the Ecophyto II+ action plan (approximately €40 million in aid per annum), the purpose of which is to reduce the use of plant protection products for both agricultural and non-agricultural uses.

### FINANCIAL SOLIDARITY WITH THE FRENCH OVERSEAS TERRITORIES

To facilitate people's access to better drinking water and sanitation services, and also to take action in favour of biodiversity, the Agency supports overseas local communities via the inter-basin solidarity programme (more than €20 million in aid per annum on average).

# Managing protected areas

## THE FRENCH BIODIVERSITY AGENCY LEADS THE WAY

The French Biodiversity Agency manages protected areas, outstanding areas in terms of species, habitats, ecological functions and services provided.

The 9 marine nature parks (3 of which are overseas) undertake many actions with a view to understanding and protecting outstanding ecosystems, while facilitating the sustainable development of economic or recreational activities. These actions are carried out under the governance of management committees, in partnership with local stakeholders.

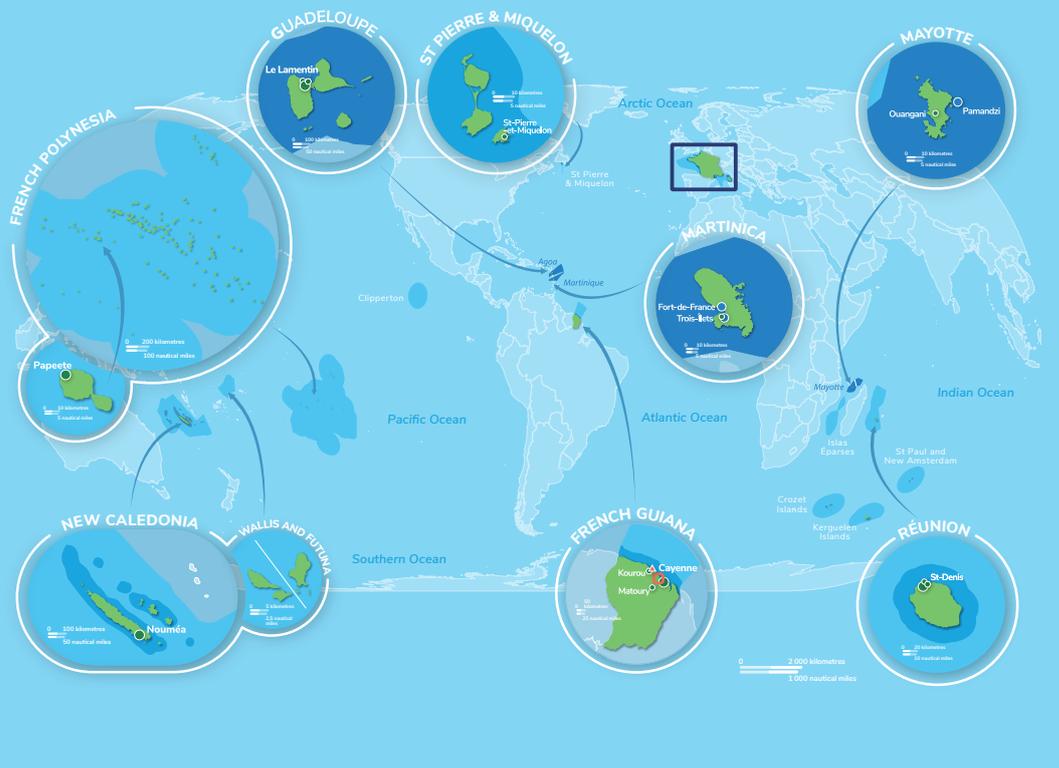
The objective of the Agoa sanctuary, a marine protected area of more than 140,000 km<sup>2</sup>, is to improve the understanding and protection of marine mammals against the direct or indirect, known or potential adverse impacts of human activities.

The 26 reserves, with varying legal designations (national hunting and wildlife reserve, hunting and wildlife reserve, national nature reserve, etc.), cover a surface area of 53,000 hectares.



## A LOCALLY ACCESSIBLE AND BROADLY ESTABLISHED AGENCY

- 5 national offices
- 11 regional divisions, 1 inter-regional division for Metropolitan France and 1 division for Overseas France
- 90 departmental service teams and 3 inter-departmental service teams for Metropolitan France, 4 departmental service teams for Overseas France, 1 Indian Ocean nature brigade and 1 territorial service team in Saint-Pierre & Miquelon
- 3 maritime facade offices for Metropolitan France
- 2 overseas territorial offices (French Polynesia and New Caledonia responsible for Wallis and Futuna), 3 territorial delegates (French Antilles, French Guiana and Indian Ocean)
- 8 marine nature parks (*Iroise, Mayotte, Golfe du Lion, Estuaires picards et de la mer d'Opale, Bassin d'Arcachon, Gironde et mer des Pertuis, Cap Corse et Agriate, Martinique*)
- Agoa sanctuary for marine mammals in the French Antilles
- Various study and research centres on species and habitats.



### OFB offices

- OFB head office
- National hub
- Economic and biodiversity engineering
- Training centre
- ▲ Study and research centre
- Patrinat joint research unit
- Headquarters of the (inter-)regional division or territorial office and ● associated branch
- (Inter-)departmental service team
- Technical knowledge unit
- Migratory species unit
- ▲ Nature reserve and natural site
- Maritime façade office and ● associated site
- Marine nature Park or Agoa head office and ● associated site

### Scope

- Region
- Marine nature park and Agoa
- Territorial waters
- Exclusive Economic Zone

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On 1st January 2020, the *Agence Française pour la Biodiversité* (AFB) and the *Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage* (ONCFS) merged into the new French Biodiversity Agency, the *Office Français de la Biodiversité* (OFB)