

# The contribution of protected areas, that safeguard fragile ecosystems with biophysical and cultural values, to agroecological transition - The case study of Torre Guaceto

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# OUTLINE

1- Introduction

2- Methodology

3- Transect walk

4- Social map

5- Conclusion





# Introduction

## 1.The Aim of Protected Areas:

- Preserve biodiversity and natural habitats
- Maintain ecosystem services and functions
- Safeguard fragile ecosystems with biophysical and cultural values
- Serve as living laboratories for studying ecological processes





## 2. Agroecology and Protected Areas:

- Support agroecological practices by preserving biodiversity and ecosystem services
- Provide a buffer against the negative effects of conventional agriculture
- Offer opportunities for agroecological research and innovation

## 3. Contribution of Protected Areas to Agroecological Transition:

- Understand the potential of protected areas in promoting agroecological practices
- Investigate the role of protected areas in safeguarding fragile ecosystems with biophysical and cultural values



# Objectives



- Explore the contribution of Torre Guaceto to agroecological transition
- Identify key biophysical and cultural values within the protected area
- Understand the interactions between protected areas and surrounding agricultural landscapes
- Highlight successful agroecological practices and lessons learned from Torre Guaceto

# Methodology



## Activities

- Interviews with two farmers practicing agroecological methods, Mario Calemone and Raffaele Leobilla.
- Field visit with Giuseppe Flore the president of the Thalassia cooperative that works in collaboration with Torre Guaceto protected area.
- Meeting with Sandro Ciccolella, the director of Torre Guaceto Nature Reserve.
- Meeting with Gianfranco Ciola, the director of GAL Alto Salento (Local Action Group).
- Meeting with researchers from the CIHEAM institute: Dr. Generosa Jenny Calabrese and Francesco Bottalico.
- Interviews with one representatives from the local tourism agency (Danielle)





# Torre Guaceto Transect Walk



Agricultural area



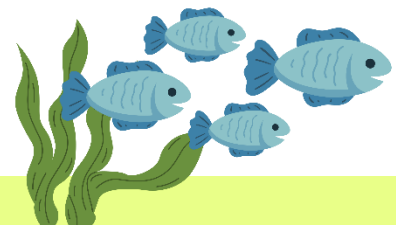
Wetland area



Coastal area



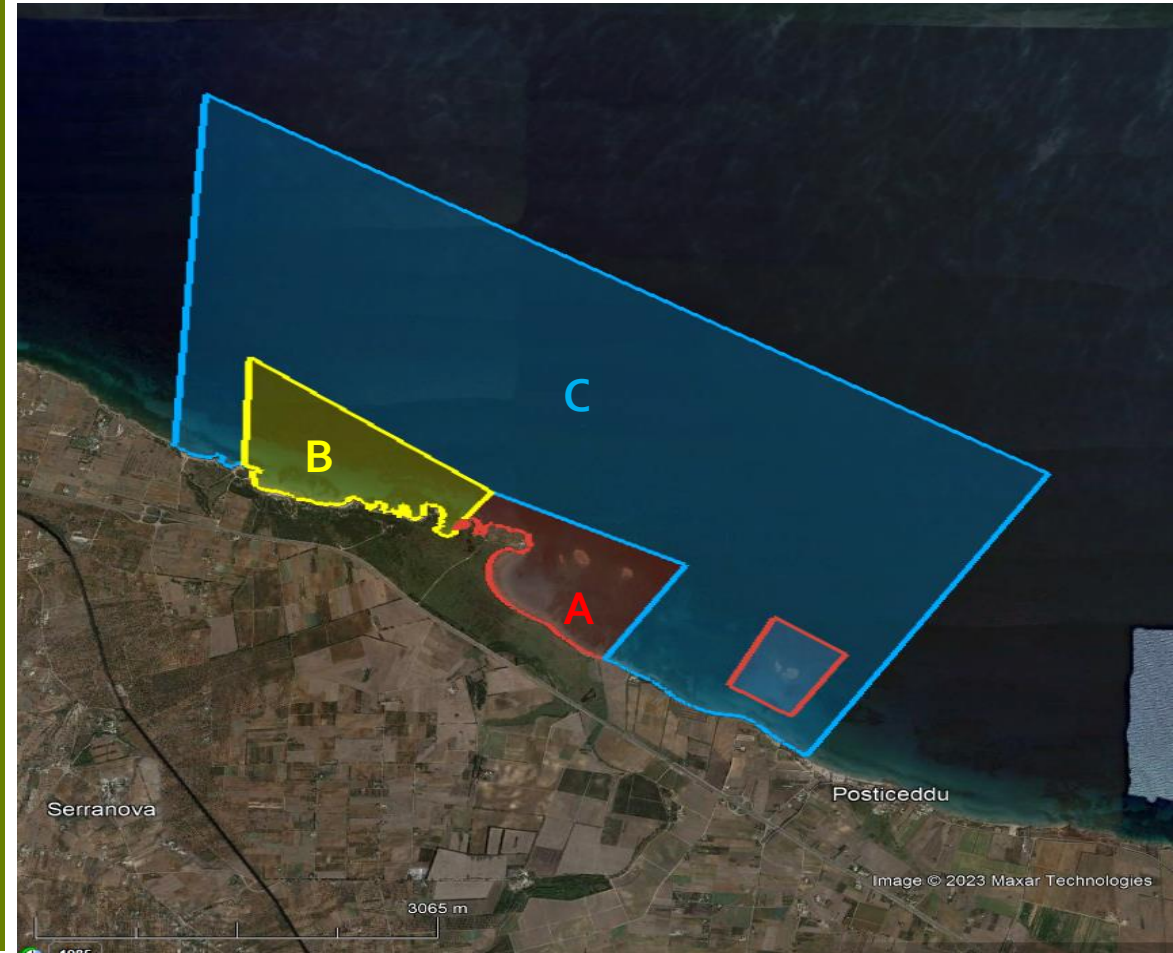
Marine area



# Marine area



- 2200 ha
- important marine habitats for numerous species of a high value
- fish nursery





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with authorization:

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**Zone B**

- Research activities
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- + bathing





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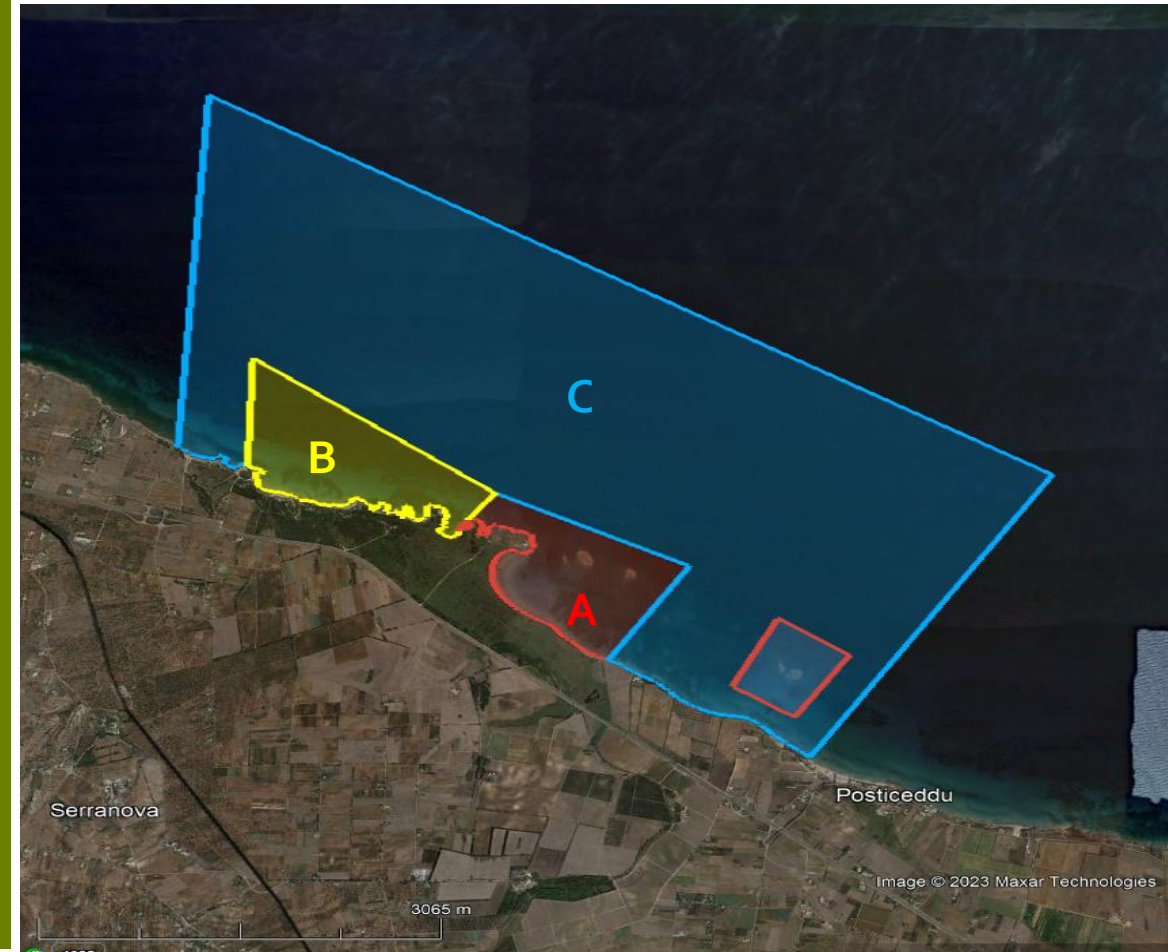
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- Guided tours (e.g. snorkeling)

## **Zone B**

- Research activities
- Guided tours
- + bathing

**Zone C** “the buffer zone”

- Research activities
- Guided tours
- + **sustainable fishing**



# Coastal area

- land-ocean interaction
- Habitats for numerous species (dunes, lagoons, rocky cliffs)
- Mediterranean maquis
- Torre Guaceto





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# Wetland area

Al GAWSIT “a place of fresh water”

- brackish water
- High productivity and biodiversity
- habitat for migratory birds (swamps and canals, reeds)
- organic carbon pool;



**Activities:** research and monitoring, environmental education activities, guided tours (birdwatching, trekking, cycling)

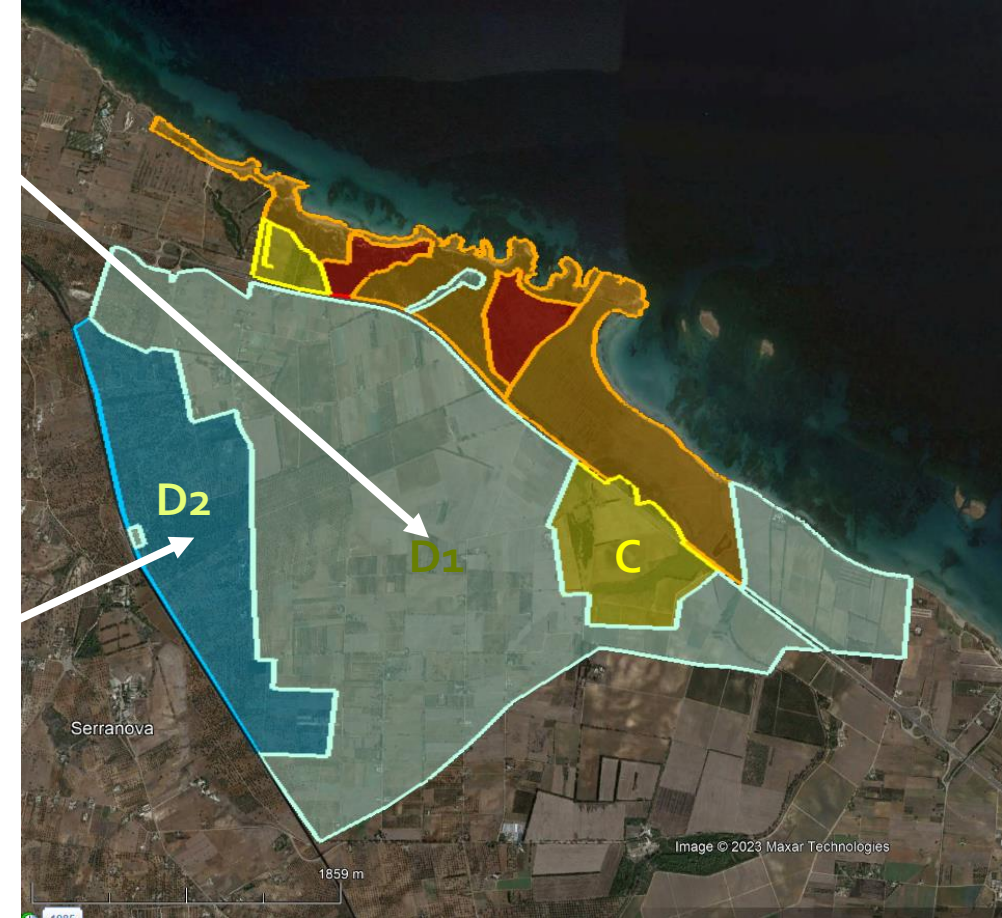


# Agricultural area

- High landscape and cultural value
- Zone D1 600 ha –arable land (tomato Fiaschetto, durum wheat, legumes, artichokes) olive groves, vineyards, almonds
- Zone D2 160 ha ancient olive groves

## Activities:

- organic agricultural activity (30%)
- traditional/ conventional agricultural activity;
- didactic-tourist activity (agritourism, ecotourism)
- research and scientific monitoring activities





# Agricultural area

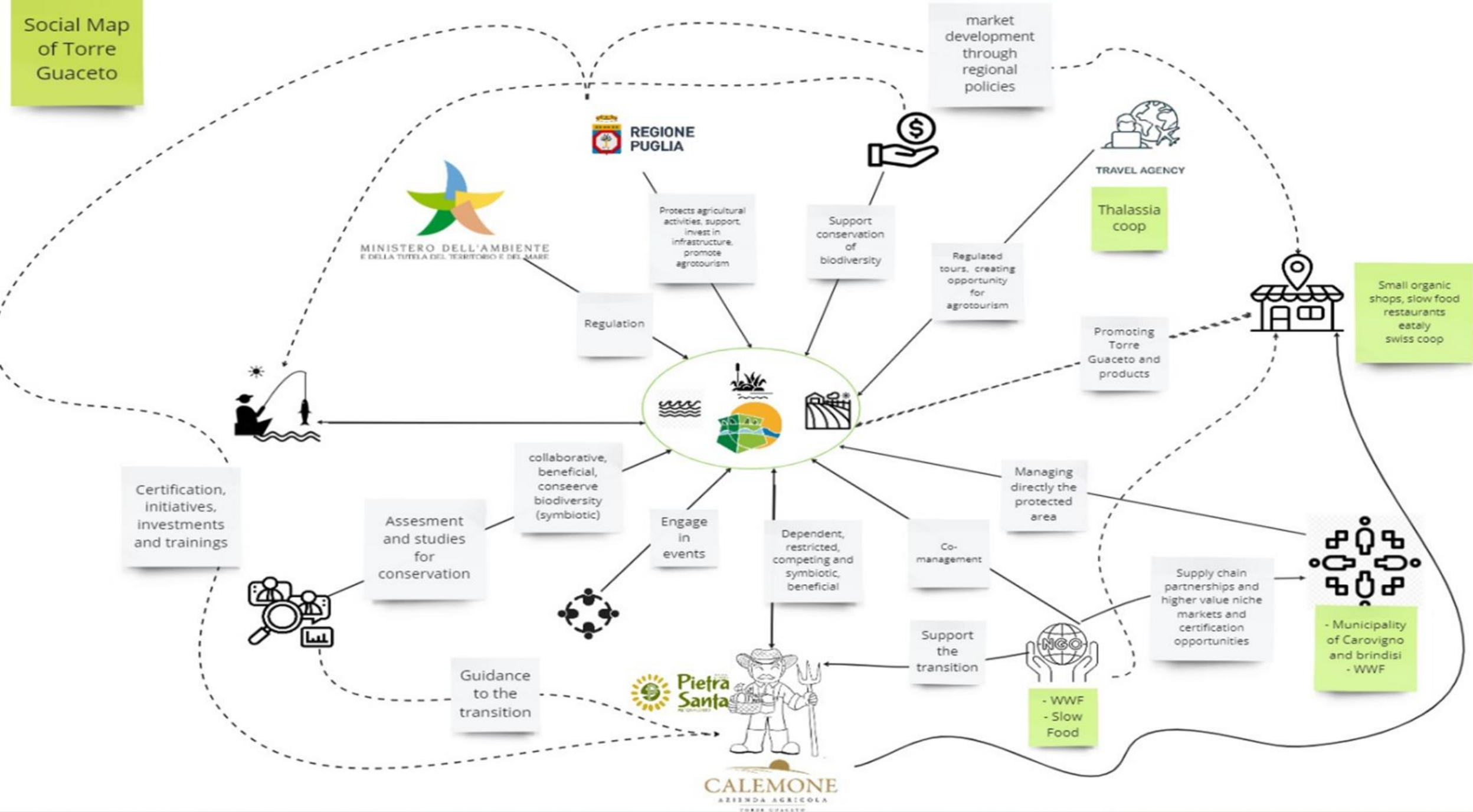
## Strengths

- Farmers-Consortium-Slow Food-Thalassia partnerships
- Promotion of sustainable agriculture and ecotourism
- Promotion of traditional plant varieties with lower environmental impact and high cultural value
- L'Oro del Parco & pomodoro Fiaschetto

## Weaknesses

- Excessive use of water → saltwater intrusion in wetland
- Use of agrochemicals → water and soil pollution
- Xylella fastidiosa → loss of ancient olives
- Small farms → lack of scale, high cost of certifications
- Lack of collaboration among farmers

# Social Map of Torre Guaceto





# Conclusion

## Key Actions

- Provision of certificates/labels (Presidium is the label that Slow Food grants to products characterized by risk of extinction, good quality, seasonal production, environmental sustainability and use of traditional knowledge)
- Subsidies & incentives ( funds were allocated to fishers to buy wider nets, farmers who use organic methods they receive £300/ha)
- Initiatives ( facilitating alliance of Chefs and Slow Food Presidia)
- Events (yearly markets of land and sea) educational and awareness campaigns



# Conclusion

## Key contributions of Torre Guaceto protected area towards agroecological transition

- Acting as a catalyst for dialogue and partnerships
- Preservation of biodiversity and local products
- Promoting sustainable farming practices
- Provision of space for income generating

## Key challenges facing Torre Guaceto protected area

- Unwillingness of farmers to engage in sustainable farming practices  
Due to:
  - Low yield and high prices of organic food products
  - Complexity of obtaining green certificates and labels
- Insufficient funding
- Lack of collaboration among farmers
- Organic farmers are facing stiff competition from conventional farmers



# Key lessons



**Collective actions**



**Diversifying livelihoods of local communities**



**Complementary roles between agriculture and protected areas**



**Good governance**







Thank you