

**Habitat of the endangered Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*) at
São Lourenço – Madeira**

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Abstract

The Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*) survives in small isolated subpopulations, some of which currently are facing extinction. In the Archipelago of Madeira, the species is found only at the Desertas Islands, where it is legally protected. The last place on the main island of Madeira where monk seals were sighted was the São Lourenço Peninsula, where a protected area was recently created. A habitat survey carried-out in the area, and recent sporadic sightings, indicated the existence of suitable resting and pupping habitat. The enforcement of protection measures in the area is intended to promote the establishment of a resident colony and enhance the species' recovery chances.

Key words: *Monachus monachus*, pinniped, Madeira, habitat, wildlife management