

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **An International Agreement for Sea Turtles: The Berlin-Torre Guaceto Partnership for the Sea Turtle Recovery Center**

Volunteer camps, artistic residencies to raise awareness, and fundraising initiatives are among the key goals of a memorandum of understanding between the German nonprofit organisation *illuseum.org* and the *Torre Guaceto Consortium*, aimed at supporting the sea turtle recovery center in the protected area of Puglia, Italy.

"It is our duty to make tangible efforts to combat climate change, which is causing devastation to natural environments and leading to the suffering and disappearance of animal species," said Michael Posch, founder of *illuseum.org*. "We have chosen to support the sea turtle conservation efforts of an institution in southern Italy because the *Torre Guaceto Management Consortium* is renowned worldwide for its excellent governance. It is made up of people who are deeply committed to the common mission and dedicate themselves with great passion to the environmental and animal welfare cause."

*illuseum.org* is a newly founded nonprofit in Berlin, created by the owner of the museum *Illuseum Berlin*, which is located in the heart of the German capital. Posch, an art manager and activist, has a deep love for nature.

The Torre Guaceto State Nature Reserve and Marine Protected Area in Puglia, Italy, is a treasure trove of biodiversity, with rich plant and animal life safeguarded by the *Torre Guaceto Management Consortium*, a non-economic public entity. Since 2000, the park has been managed by balancing protection efforts, including some bold initiatives, with sustainable promotion and public use. This governance has earned the park numerous awards, such as the Blue Park title, which is given to the best MPAs (Marine Protected Areas) worldwide, and the MPA Award for being one of the top two marine areas in Europe.

"We are thrilled to accept *illuseum.org*'s offer of collaboration and support," said Rocky Malatesta, president of the *Torre Guaceto Management Consortium*. "In this era of constant change, networks between institutions and private partners are crucial for implementing concrete and far-reaching plans. This initiative has been praised by the *Department of Tourism, Cultural Economy, and Territory Development of the Puglia Region*, which will support community outreach and engagement through the regional government's institutional communication sector and the *Pugliapromozione Agency*."

The agreement, signed today in Berlin after almost a year of discussions, will soon result in various projects, including: workshops in the German capital to raise awareness about sea turtle conservation and support for the Torre Guaceto recovery center; organising volunteer camps for German nature lovers during the off-season; and an international artistic residency program that will use murals to spotlight the project's mission across Europe.

"Exchanging best practices and knowledge, promoting the region, and protecting our ecosystems through actions that involve different public and private actors, even beyond national borders," said Serena Triggiani, Puglia's Regional Environmental Councillor. "For these reasons and more, I enthusiastically welcome this initiative, which we as a region fully support, backing organisations like the *Torre Guaceto Consortium* in their extraordinary work of safeguarding the landscape and environment, as well as the geobiodiversity that our land is rich in. This project aligns perfectly with our regional sustainable development strategy, following the guidelines set by the European Union. Knowing that we can collaborate with European partners to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda encourages us to do even more and better to deliver a welcoming and sustainable world to future generations."