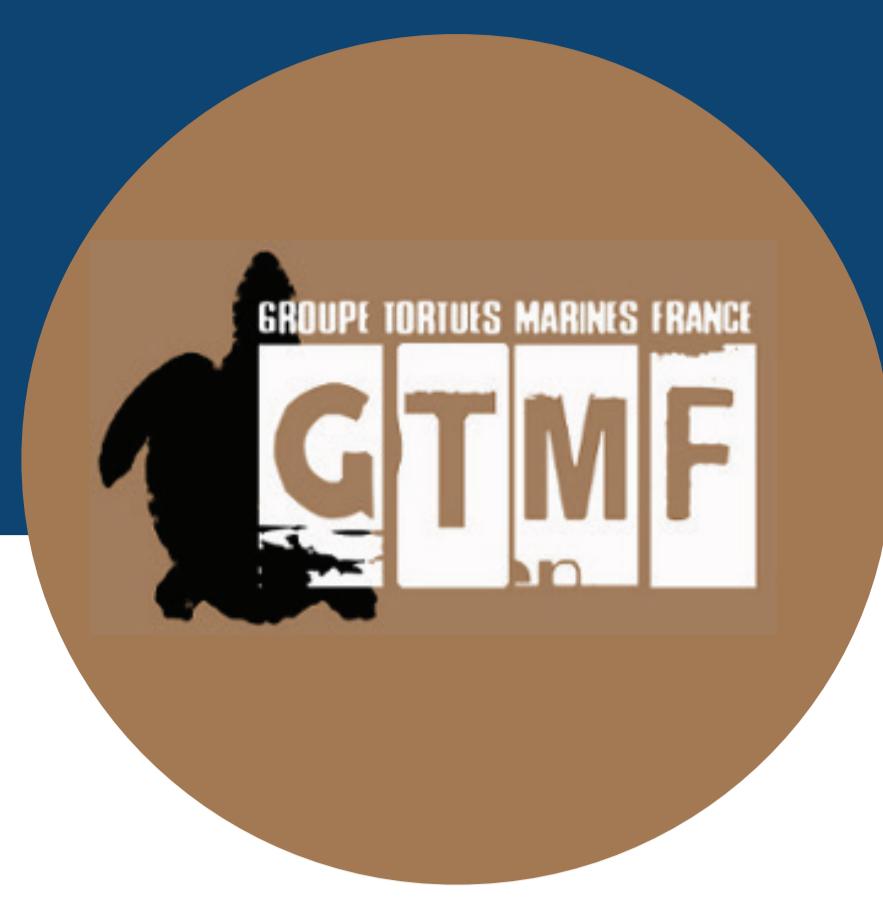


Mapping the habitats of sea turtles in France territories : from a SWOT report to a national atlas



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With 12 overseas territories in all the world's oceans, France occupies an area of nearly 10.2 millions square kilometers in 5 oceans and seas. Six of the world's 7 sea turtle species (all but the flatback) are found in the French territories, which host critical habitats including major nesting beaches.

Since the 1970s, knowledge about the terrestrial and marine biogeography of sea turtles in France has increased significantly thanks to activities carried out by members of the Groupe Tortues Marines France (French Sea Turtle Group – GTMF), a group of 200 experts and stakeholders including scientists initiated by the French Ministry in charge of the environment.

As a first step towards investigating French turtle distribution and strengthening conservation efforts, a partnership was established by GTMF with the State of the World's Sea Turtles (SWOT) program in order to map the complete nesting biogeography of sea turtles in all the French territories and provide a first synthesis of data available. The second step will consist in the publication of a national Atlas, currently under preparation.



France is a rare sea turtle "Megadiversity Country" with a high level of global responsibility and actions: strict legislations and 4 regional turtle action plans (Guadeloupe/St Martin, Martinique, French Guiana, West Indian ocean territories)



The global-scale collaborative network [GTMF] includes all stakeholders who contribute in complementarity to the conservation of sea turtles, and to the acquisition of knowledge in France.

gtmf.mnhn.fr

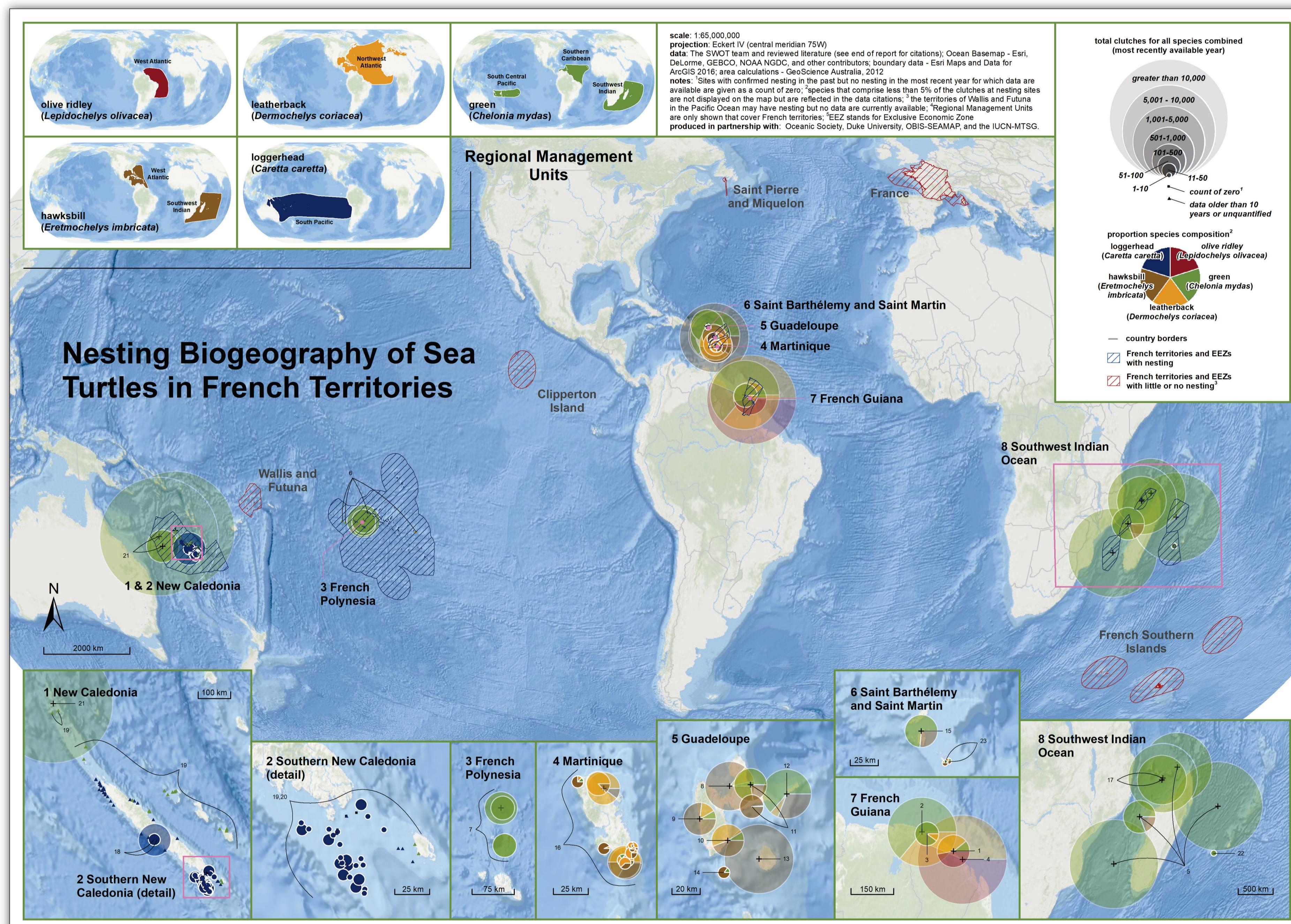


Figure 1: SWOT Report vol. 13 map describes nesting activity of the 5 sea turtle species known to nest on French beaches.

The amount of France's EEZ that serves as foraging and migratory habitat for turtles certainly encompasses several sea turtle populations at all life stages including parts of the 18 Regional Management Units, some of which are among the world's most or least threatened (SWOT Report Vol. 7).

SWOT
THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S SEA TURTLES
seaturtlestatus.org



The first **French Atlas on sea turtles** will be published thanks to the GTMF stakeholder contributions and under the coordination of the French Museum of Natural History (MNHN).

The main objective of this atlas is to publish a state of knowledge on the distribution and ecology of sea turtle in the French territories. It is carried out in the framework of the INPN (French Inventory of Natural Heritage) which is the national reference information system on biodiversity.

The collaboration with the SWOT allowed to launch the data collection for the atlas. Maps of nesting sites will be completed with distribution, migration, genetic and habitat data in order to present the most complete and recent knowledge available. Each of the 6 species will be described at the global, regional and local scales corresponding to the 15 territories where sea turtles are present.

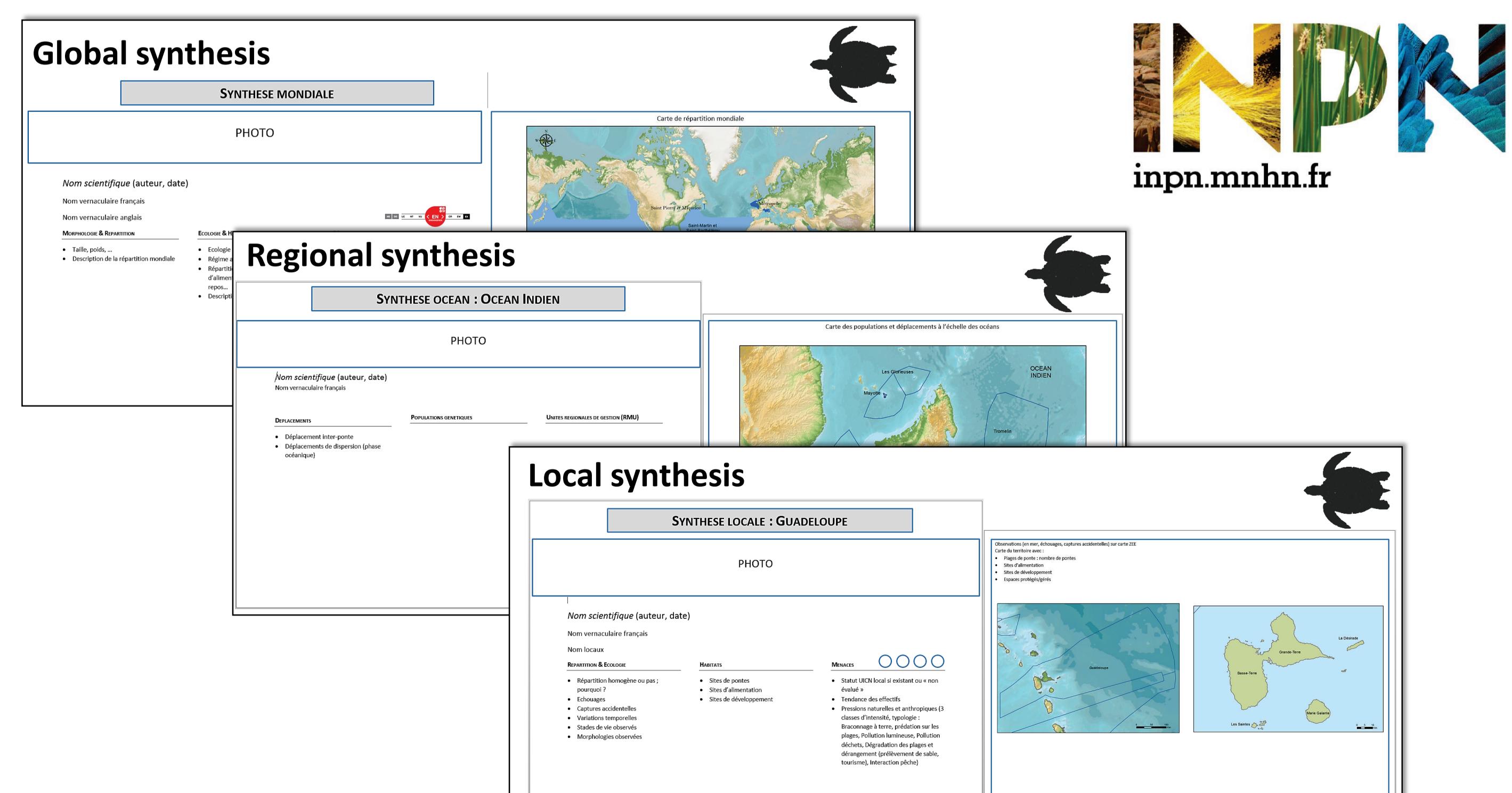


Figure 2: Models of the species description pages.