



ETNewsletter

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ETN IN NUMBERS



1 BILLION TIMES, THANK YOU!

ETN reached a huge milestone on 20 November 2025 - our 1.000.000.000th detection (>290M animal tags, as well as beacons, and receivers built-in tags)! Our 'little' community is making waves all across Europe, and for this we'd like to say thank you.

01

ETN WRAPPED - TOP FIVES OF 2025

ETN accomplished some big things

1. Reached **1 BILLION** total detections (we know we've already mentioned it, but it's our biggest accomplishment so we'll mention it again 😊);
2. Huge strides forward in contributing aquatic animal movement to the Digital Twin of the Ocean;
3. Maintained and redeployed all four STRAITS arrays;
4. Tagged **11 new species**;

- 5. Registered 83 new ETN users, bringing us to **604 ETN users!**

We tagged an impressive number of species

- 1. 680 European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*)
- 2. 296 Brown trout (*Salmo trutta*)
- 3. 201 Twaite shad (*Alosa fallax*)
- 4. 120 Chub (*Squalius cephalus*)
- 5. 119 Wels catfish (*Silurus glanis*)



02

TAKING OPI TO THE NEXT LEVEL

New study estimates behavioural states from a single receiver using OPI tags

Researchers from ETN have developed a novel, cost-effective method to estimate fish activity patterns using the simplest acoustic telemetry setup: a single receiver and standard ID transmitters. Originally designed for OPI tags but applicable across brands and protocols, the method showcases the advantages of data sharing and interoperability.

By analysing the Times of Arrival (TOAs) of acoustic signals, the approach infers distances between tagged fish and receivers. Variations in these TOA-based distances allow estimation of movement metrics—such as step lengths—which can be used to classify behavioural states through Hidden Markov Models or similar inference tools.

Validated across six datasets and multiple species (check out the figure below), the method performed consistently well regardless of transmitter manufacturer. It is especially useful for species with site fidelity and for detecting stationary (e.g., post-mortality) tags. This accessible innovation opens the door to detailed behavioural studies using minimal equipment.

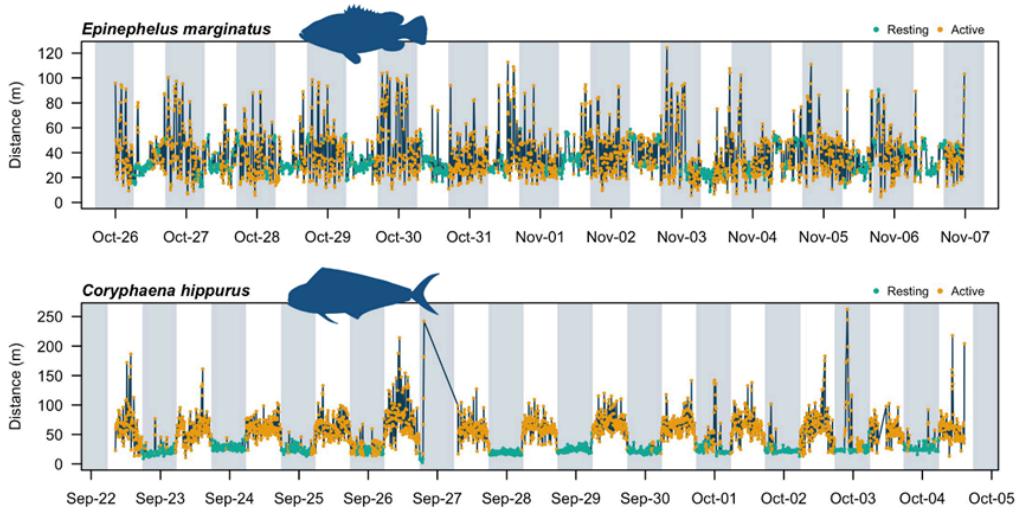


Figure 1: TOA-based distance estimates and inferred behavioural states (active and resting) for a Dusky grouper (*Epinephelus marginatus*) and a Common dolphinfish (*Coryphaena hippurus*). Shaded areas represent nighttime periods according to local sunrise/sunset times. Behavioural states were classified using a Hidden Markov Model applied to step lengths calculated at 5-minute intervals. Aspíllaga et al. 2025 ©

Read the full story [here](#).

03

TRACKING GIANTS IN THE MAKING

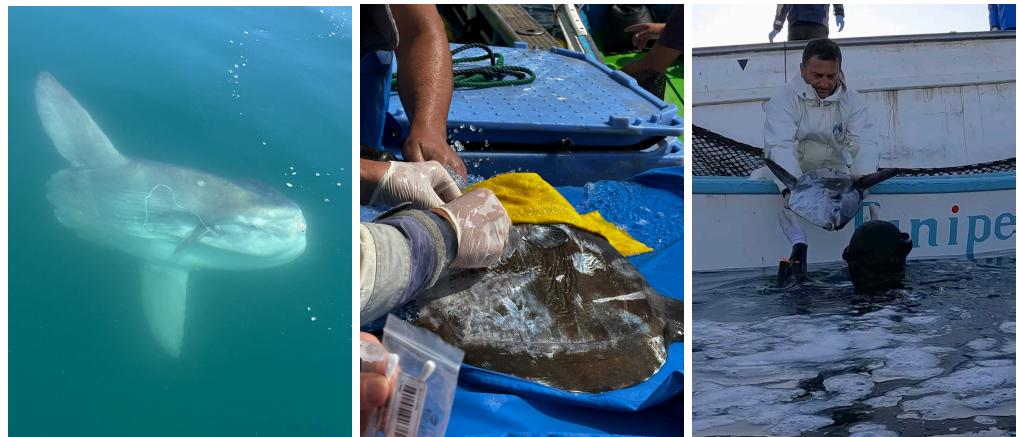
Juvenile ocean sunfish, the world's largest teleost, are being tracked right here in Europe

Our team recently expanded its work on ocean sunfish (*Mola mola*) by tagging 24 individuals with long-life acoustic transmitters, with most individuals measuring less than 50 cm. These young ocean sunfish were tagged off southern Portugal, an area that appears to serve as an important seasonal habitat for this species.

Although the project is still in its early stages, the first results are already revealing fascinating movement patterns. Several tagged fish have been detected in the Strait of Gibraltar acoustic array deployed through the [STRAITS](#) project, providing rare evidence of juvenile *Mola mola* movement patterns. These detections highlight the connectivity between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean for this species at much earlier life stages than previously documented.

Because the transmitters have an expected battery life of more than seven years, this work will produce a long time series of individual tracks. We are excited to follow these animals over the coming years

to understand their routes and habitat use: will they continue into the Mediterranean, return to the Atlantic, or surprise us with entirely different pathways? The next chapters of their journeys are just beginning.



Images: CCMAR ©. Left: swimming ocean sunfish. Middle: juvenile ocean sunfish under tagging. Right: tagged ocean sunfish being released by diver.

04

COOL SCICOMM

Engaging science communication comic strips developed!

The FishOWF+ project monitors the presence and behaviour of fish and crustaceans across six French offshore wind farms. Talented illustrator Lynda Couturier made a comic strip to explain the acoustic telemetry work that is done for the project! Great science communication work, congrats to France Energies Marines, the leading institute of the FishOWF+ project.

[Discover the full strip & learn more about the FishOWF+ project!](#)



05

AN APP FOR AUTOMATIC DEPLOYMENT REPORT IS HERE

Automated receiver deployment reporting for everyone!

<https://rshiny.europeantrackingnetwork.org/etn-deployment-report/>

In the course of the STRAITS project, a shiny app was developed to help acoustic telemetry colleagues with reporting of receiver deployments. You can select one or more acoustic project codes, give a date range, and overview tables and plots will automatically be created. The report can be downloaded as .html (for interactive figures) or .docx (so information can directly be copy-pasted into reports to funders etc.).

Warm invitation for everyone to try it out!

Feedback is very welcome here: info@europeantrackingnetwork.org

06

KEEP AN EYE OUT - UPCOMING EVENTS

Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership Symposium

- The 2nd SBEP Symposium will take place in Bucharest, Romania, on 11 February 2026. The symposium is a gathering of blue-economy stakeholders to take stock of progress and set priorities for Europe's sustainable blue future. Find out more [here](#).

World Recreational Fisheries Conference 2026

- The 11th World Recreational Fisheries Conference is taking place in Eastern Cape, South Africa, 19-22 February 2026. Find out more [here](#).

Ocean Sciences Meeting 2026

- The major ocean science event of 2026 - Ocean Sciences Meeting - is happening 22-27 February 2026, in Glasgow, Scotland. This meeting is *the* forum for interdisciplinary exchange across physical, biological and social oceanography, and **there's a session on animal tracking!!** Find out more [here](#).

International Workshop of PhDs and Post-doctoral Fellows on Anadromous Salmonids

- The International Workshop of PhD Students and Postdoctoral Fellows on Anadromous Salmonids (NoWPaS) will be held at Hólar University, Iceland, from March 2–7, 2026. Find out more [here](#).

Sharks International 2026

- Sharks International is the global conference for scientists working on sharks, rays and chimaera. In 2026, the conference is taking place in Colombo, Sri Lanka, 4-8 May 2026. Find out more [here](#).

2026 Pelagic Symposium

- The 2026 Pelagic Symposium is happening in Mexico City, Mexico, 4-8 May 2026, with the conference theme of "Navigating changes in small pelagic fish and forage communities: climate, ecosystems, and sustainable fisheries". Find out more [here](#).

World Biodiversity Forum

- Under the theme of Leading Transformation Together, the fourth edition of the World Biodiversity Forum WBF will take place from Sunday, 14 June to Friday, 19 June 2026 in Davos, Switzerland. Find out more [here](#).

Estuarine and Coastal Sciences Association

- The ECSA61 is happening in Brussels, Belgium, 24-27 August 2026. The meeting aims to bridge the gap between science and policy in estuarine and coastal marine biodiversity. Find out more [here](#).

2026 ICES Annual Science Conference

- The 2026 ICES Annual Science Conference will take place in Brest, France, 15-18 September 2026. Call for abstracts is open! Find out more [here](#).

ETN Symposium 2026

- The 4th biennial ETN Symposium will take place 13-15 October 2026 in Copenhagen, Denmark. More information is coming soon!

World Conference on Marine Biodiversity

- The 7th edition of the World Conference on Marine Biodiversity will be organized in Bruges between November 17th and 20th 2026. The WCMB 2026 will fly the UN Ocean Decade flag, as it has been endorsed as a UN Ocean Decade Event. The overall theme of the Conference is "The marine biodiversity insights we need, for the ocean we want". **There is a [session](#) on animal movement, behaviour and biologging!** Find out more [here](#).

07

KEEP IN TOUCH

Stay updated; follow us everywhere!

