

## **From the Breakwater to the Aquarium to protect the gorgonian coral**

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**As works for the construction of the Port of Genoa's New Breakwater proceed underwater, measures are taken to safeguard in full the marine ecosystem.**

A firm commitment towards a sustainable and responsible approach across the large-scale infrastructure industry means safeguarding the marine species in the port habitat: this is at the core of the collaboration with the Genoa Aquarium which will provide temporary shelter for select specimens of the gorgonian coral, located and registered during the underwater analyses conducted along the seabed at the base of the new breakwater. Upon completion of the construction works, the marine species can return to their natural habitat.

The gorgonian population can live up to a depth of 200 metres and, although exhibiting some of the characteristics of plants, they are actually marine animals (colonial invertebrates), composed of tiny polyps, just like corals, which act as a sole organism. The specimens, which have found a temporary refuge in the Aquarium, are currently being acclimatised and monitored by a team of marine biologists.

The cooperation between Genoa Aquarium and PerGenovaBreakwater, led by Webuild, with Fincantieri Infrastructure Opere Marittime, Fincosit and Sidra, has been supported and authorised by the Italian Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security.

In the meantime, works for the construction of the new breakwater are underway and, to date, over 2400 giant columns have been built, approximately 1.2 million tonnes of gravel has been deposited, and the underwater search for unexploded ordnances along the seabed continues, on schedule to be completed by this summer.

The preservation of the ecosystem in the surrounding area is a key element of the project for the construction of the New Breakwater, a large-scale infrastructure facility, strategic not only to the Port and the City of Genoa, but also to the Italian chain supply industry overall.