



OUR OCEAN

GREECE - APRIL 15-17, 2024

AN OCEAN OF POTENTIAL

GREECE'S COMMITMENTS



01

BAN BOTTOM TRAWLING IN ALL MARINE PROTECTED AREAS BY 2030, STARTING FROM MARINE NATIONAL PARKS BY 2026.

This is the single most effective measure for the preservation of marine biodiversity, the restoration of marine ecosystems and the promotion of sustainable fishing practices.

Bottom trawling is, according to the EU Regulations, allowed in the Mediterranean Sea in depths between **50 and 1000** meters and to a distance from the coastline greater than **1,5 nautical miles**. However, patrolling the implementation is quite challenging due to the complexity of the geography of the Greek seas and the very large coastline.

Bottom trawling is the single greatest threat to marine habitats as it directly damages the sea bottom creating significant disturbance to the marine food chain and affecting thus all marine species, i.e. the marine ecosystems. The Mediterranean seabed can take many years to recover from the effects of trawling. In particular, the nature of the Greek ecological zones of the benthos is particularly sensitive and cannot recover, with the result that the destruction is often irreversible. Furthermore, according to the most recent studies, bottom trawling is also a significant source of GHG emissions comparable in quantity to those of aviation.

Banning bottom trawling in the MPAs will significantly increase the protection of many **vulnerable species such as poseidonia and corals as well as many benthic ecosystems and vulnerable habitats. It will also facilitate the meaningful enforcement of existing bans and restrictions** since there will be less fragmentation of protected areas. It can allow damaged habitats to regenerate, supporting overall ecosystem health, increasing carbon storage and having significant spillover effects to the adjacent areas as similar actions undertaken by other countries such as the UK have shown. It will thus **ensure the long-term sustainability of fish stocks**, which will contribute in the long-term to maintaining the viability of local communities, especially areas that depend on fishing.

The transition from the cessation of fishing with trawlers (247 boats according to the official records) should be fair. Compensation mechanisms could help affected communities. A fee on the offshore wind farms could also be used to that effect. **Balancing employment, food quality and tourism concerns is vital during this transition.**

IMPLEMENTING BODY/BENEFICIARY:

Coastguard, NECCA, Ministry of Rural Development and Food

OOA AREA OF ACTION: Sustainable fisheries/MPAs

AREA: East Mediterranean Sea | **DURATION:** 7 years (2024-2030)

BUDGET: statutory measure and, from 2026 and thereon, up to 30 million € from funds from the ETS revenues, the Ministry of Rural Development and Food and from the development of offshore wind farms (compensation measures)

02

ENLARGEMENT OF THE MARINE PROTECTED AREAS' NETWORK OF GREECE TO MEET THE 30% TARGET BY 2024.

Marine protected areas (MPAs) in Greece currently occupy an area of 22,796 km² and cover **18.3%** of the country's marine waters. According to par. 1 of Art. 174 of Law 5037/2023, MPAs have to expand to **30%** of Greek territorial waters by **2030**.

To meet this target, Greece will **establish in 2024 two additional marine national parks** (as per point a, par. 2 of Art. 19 of Law 1650/1986) **covering**

OVER 32% of the country's territorial waters:

A. THE IONIAN MARINE NATIONAL PARK (from north of Kefallonia to south of Antikythira) **with a total area of over 14,000 km²** (including the existing Natura 2000 areas of **3,668.86 km²**). The park covers over **11%** of Greek territorial waters, the Ionian segment of the Hellenic trench being its core (a net increase of Greek MPAs of more than 8%) building on 13 existing Natura 2000 areas (GR222003, GR2220004, GR2220005, GR2220007, GR2210001, GR2210002, GR2210004, GR2550010, GR2330008, GR2540009, GR2540003, GR3000008 and GR3000019).

The park is established because the area is very important for **marine mammals** such as *Physeter macrocephalus*, *Ziphius cavirostris* and *Stenella coeruleoalba*. Furthermore, there is **significant presence of seals *Monachus monachus* as well as dolphins *Grampus griseus*, *Delphinus delphis* and *Tursiops truncatus***. The area includes one of the most important areas for the nesting of *Caretta caretta*, areas with *Posidonia oceanica* and *Cystoseira sp.* as well as the **natural habitat type of reefs**. In deep waters, there are also coral formations and deep-sea corals are marine biogenic habitats of high conservation value.



B. THE AEGEAN MARINE NATIONAL PARK with a total area of over 8,000 km² (including the existing Natura 2000 areas of 545 km²). The park covers **6.61%** of Greek territorial waters, (a net increase of Greek MPAs of over 6%). The core of the marine park is the small rocky islets, almost all of them being already designated as Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) and the surrounding marine environment. It builds on 13 existing Natura 2000 areas (GR3000011, GR4210011, GR4220007, GR4220030, GR4220023, GR4210009, GR4210022, GR4210007, GR4210032, GR4210023, GR4220022, GR4220036 and GR4210021) to expand the protection towards the sea. The main objective is to protect the wild birds that are in abundance in the area, i.e. sea birds such as *Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii*, *Larus audouinii* and *Calonectris diomedea* as well as *Puffinus yelkouan* that use the sea as a feeding ground. In most of the islets there are also colonies of *Falco eleonora*, whereas in Antimilos the *Aquila fasciata* is reproduced. The islets of the proposed park is also used by many migratory bird species for food and as a resting station during the spring and autumn migration. Furthermore, there is significant presence of seals *Monachus monachus* as well as dolphins such as *Delphinus delphis* and *Tursiops truncatus*, whereas, at deeper waters, there are cetaceans such as *Physeter macrocephalus*, *Stenella coeruleoalba* and *Ziphius cavirostris*.

To further develop the scientific knowledge about these MPAs and proceed with their detailed demarcation, ecological surveys will be carried out, through **The LIFE MareNatura (2023-2029)** both from refining/updating the available data for marine habitats from various sources and also by carrying out extensive ecological surveys covering **228,000 km** of aerial survey transects, and **10,000 n.m.** of boat survey transects.

IMPLEMENTING BODY/BENEFICIARY: NECCA

AREA: Mediterranean Sea (Ionian and Aegean Sea)

DURATION: -

BUDGET: statutory measure + €10,707,187.54 from EU funds (LIFE program) and Green Fund

OOB AREA OF ACTION: Marine protected areas





03

ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL MONITORING AND SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM OF THE MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

The project includes the establishment of a scientific monitoring and surveillance system for all marine protected areas (MPAs) of Greece, by using portable equipment (such as portable GPS, cameras etc.), remote sensing, harbor type and open sea vessels, including aerial surveillance (UAVs). A horizontal information system will be also applied to enable automatic communication with sea vessels, providing all the necessary information and data for the

concerned areas. This project is part of the investment “Biodiversity protection as a driver for sustainable growth” that is included in the Recovery and Resilience Plan for Greece. Monitoring will also be supported through mapping platform combining AIS systems (carried out by the international non-profit organization Global Fishing Watch (GFW) and A C Laskaridis Foundation) that monitors fishing activity in near real-time..

IMPLEMENTING BODY:

NECCA with the cooperation of Global Fishing Watch (GFW) and A C Laskaridis Foundation

BENEFICIARY: Ministry of Environment and Energy with the assistance of the Coastguard as user

AREA: East Mediterranean Sea | **DURATION:** 2 years (2024-2025)

BUDGET: 10.58 million € from RRF | **OOO AREA OF ACTION:** Marine protected areas



04

MARINE HABITAT MAPPING OF THE GREEK MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

Marine habitat mapping is an essential tool to gain a holistic representation of marine ecosystems and their distribution patterns and status, to design effective monitoring programmes and to deliver accurate and extensive on marine spatial planning, whilst to support policies on scaling up blue

economy activities and simultaneously protecting and restoring marine protected areas. In particular, marine habitat mapping in Greece involves all MPAs of the country that are included in the EU Natura 2000 network, 118 in total, covering 18.3% of the country's marine waters.

IMPLEMENTING BODY/BENEFICIARY:

Ministry of Environment and Energy with the assistance of NECCA

AREA: East Mediterranean Sea

DURATION: 1 year preparation (call of interest & procurement phase)

+ 3 years (implementation phase) (2024-2027)

BUDGET: 8.4 million € from cohesion funds

OOO AREA OF ACTION: Marine protected areas





05

ACTION FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF MARINE HABITATS, MIGRATION ROUTES AND FORAGING AREAS OF SEA TURTLES AND DEVELOPMENT OF A DIGITAL DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEM (DSS) FOR THE MITIGATION OF THE EFFECTS OF FISHERIES ON SEA TURTLES.

Protecting marine megafauna presents significant challenges, largely due to our limited understanding of their distribution and susceptibility to human influences. This is especially evident with iconic sea turtles, which traverse a range of habitats throughout their lives. Currently, much of our knowledge about sea turtle populations comes from monitoring their nesting habitats, where mature individuals lay their eggs. While major nesting beaches are routinely monitored over several years, our understanding of sea turtles' marine habitats remains limited.

Sea turtles are highly migratory creatures known for their long lifespan. Marine habitats play a critical role in the life cycle of sea turtles, serving as crucial locations for foraging, overwintering, development, and migration. With the exception of brief periods (i.e. few hours within years) when mature females emerge onto sandy shores for nesting, sea turtles spend the vast majority of their lives in marine environments. Therefore, obtaining information on the spatial distribution of turtles in the marine realm is essential for effectively addressing the challenges that their populations are facing.



There is emerging evidence, largely based on opportunistic data, indicating that the marine waters in Greece harbor critical marine habitats for various life stages of different sea turtle species. Public observations, boat sightings, and stranding data provide evidence of the year-round presence of these species in multiple locations across the Aegean and Ionian Seas. However, such limited, non-standardized information does not guarantee the development of effective strategies aimed at improving the conservation and resilience of sea turtle populations.

With a presence spanning an impressive **50–100 million years**, sea turtles are among the most ancient groups of animals on the planet. The two sea turtle species inhabiting the eastern Mediterranean (*Caretta caretta* και *Chelonian mydas*) are listed in Annexes II and IV of the European Habitats Directive, as well as in the Bern Convention (Annex II), the Bonn Convention (Annex I), the Barcelona Convention (Annex II), and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. Additionally, marine turtles are categorized under the “Reptiles” species group of Descriptor 1 (D1) of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD, 2008/56/EC), which aims to maintain biological diversity by ensuring the quality and occurrence of habitats and the distribution and abundance of species in accordance with prevailing physiographic, geographic, and climatic conditions. Each Descriptor of the MSFD is associated with a set of criteria defining Good Environmental Status (GES) achievement for the state of

different ecosystem elements, as well as for the pressures and impacts resulting from anthropogenic activities. For sea turtles, five criteria are applicable. Four of these criteria (D1C1, D1C2, D1C4, and D1C5) are related to information about marine habitats and their use. For example, D1C4 pertains to population distribution range, while D1C5 addresses the extent and condition of suitable habitats that support different life stages. Both of these criteria align with Criteria CI 4 and CI3 of the Barcelona Convention, as well as with Criterion B of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

It should also be noted that in line with the targets of the **EU Biodiversity Strategy**, aiming for **30%** of its territory to be protected, with **10%** designated as strictly protected by **2030**, and the integration of ecological corridors into conservation planning, our conservation strategies must be built upon robust, comprehensive, and up-to-date information.

Against this background, **the Action aims to identify and protect the marine habitats of sea turtles in the Greek seas.** Under this ambitious action will assemble, integrate, and improve the most promising approaches into a comprehensive framework that consists of a set of methodological tools, databases and background information. The framework will enhance our conservation capacity by building integrative approaches and concepts for conservation planning, and explore potential trade-offs between biological, environmental and human related processes.

The Action aims to purchase and install **200 satellite tags on sea turtles** (*Caretta caretta* και *Chelonian mydas*), as well as develop **a smart, digital, spatially explicit Decision Support System (DSS) Utilizing telemetry data, ecological models, and remote sensing sources, the DSS will serve as the cornerstone for prioritizing conservation and management actions with spatial precision.** This system will empower the identification of sea turtle habitat hotspots and the detection of high-risk areas, thereby enhancing the functionality of an early warning system to mitigate potential impacts at local, regional, and national levels. By reducing the adverse effects of fisheries on sea turtle populations, the DSS will play a crucial role in advancing the **EU Biodiversity Strategy targets.** The spatial information generated will assist our country in fulfilling the obligations outlined in the MSFD and in guiding spatial planning processes effectively.

IMPLEMENTING BODY/BENEFICIARY: Ministry of Environment and Energy/NECCA
AREA: East Mediterranean Sea (16 Natura 2000 sites and specifically: GR2210002, GR2220004, GR2220007, GR2320001, GR2320011, GR2330005, GR2330009, GR2540002, GR2540003, GR2550004, GR2550005, GR2550010, GR4310004, GR4330004, GR4340003, GR4340006)
DURATION: 48 months
BUDGET: 2.953 million € from ERDF 2021 – 2027
OOB AREA OF ACTION: Marine Protected Areas



06

DEVELOPMENT OF DEDICATED PROGRAMME OF MEASURES TO ACHIEVE GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS IN THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT OF FOUR SPECIFIC MARINE AREAS: CORINTHIAKOS, THERMAIKOS, SARONIKOS AND PAGASETIKOS GULF

Four specific gulfs have been selected, **Corinthiakos, Thermaikos, Saronikos and Pagasetikos Gulf**, to implement the Marine Strategy Directive at the geographical scale of these gulfs in order to take tailor-made actions to achieve good environmental status in line with the directions of Directive **2008/56/EC** on marine strategy. A thorough

analysis will be undertaken of the features or characteristics of, and pressures and impacts on, their marine waters, identifying the predominant pressures and impacts on those waters, and an economic and social analysis of their use and of the cost of degradation of the marine waters.

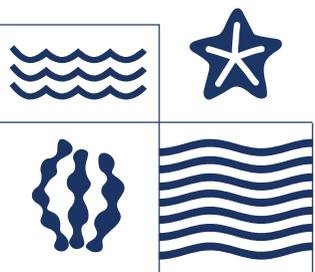
IMPLEMENTING BODY/BENEFICIARY: Ministry of Environment and Energy

AREA: East Mediterranean Sea

DURATION: 1 year (call of interest & procurement phase) + 2 years (implementation) (2024-2026)

BUDGET: 1.5 million € from cohesion funds

OOO AREA OF ACTION: Marine pollution



07

APPLICATION OF DIGITAL TECHNIQUES AND COMBINED MEASUREMENT METHODS TO IMPROVE MONITORING AND INSPECTION OF MARINE POLLUTION

A combination of available measurement and monitoring techniques (sensors, drones, satellite remote sensing) on marine water quality, along with digital means of analysis and management (e.g. internet of things, data hubs, geospatial business intelligence) will be applied to strengthen the monitoring programme for

the assessment of the environmental status of Greek marine waters and to enhance the Greek environmental inspection system of maritime areas. This digital project is part of the investment "Smart Infrastructure with environmental and cultural focus" that is included in the Recovery and Resilience Plan for Greece.

IMPLEMENTING BODY: Hellenic Republic Asset Development Fund

BENEFICIARY: Ministry of Environment and Energy | **AREA:** East Mediterranean Sea

DURATION: 2 years (2024-2025) | **BUDGET:** 5 million € from RRF

OOO AREA OF ACTION: Marine pollution

08

COASTAL AND MARINE WATERS MONITORING THROUGH REMOTE SENSING TO TACKLE MARINE ECOLOGICAL PHENOMENA

Observing and monitoring of the coastal and marine waters based on remote satellite sensing techniques, will provide specialized information and address marine ecological phenomena, such as phytoplankton outbreaks, marine slime, turbidity from marine excavations and outbreaks of jellyfish populations, in order to effectively take appropriate prevention and control actions and measures to protect marine

environment and human health. Monitoring is applied in five case areas since they constitute the marine areas with the most frequent occurrences of marine ecological phenomena:

- a) Dardanelles/Marmara Sea, Evros Estuary
- b) Nestos estuary, Kavala Gulf, Strymonikos,
- c) Thermaic Gulf,
- d) Pagasetic and Maliakos Gulf and
- e) Saronic Gulf.

IMPLEMENTING BODY: University of Aegean

BENEFICIARY: Ministry of Environment and Energy

AREA: Aegean Sea | **DURATION:** 3 years (2023-2025)

BUDGET: 120.000 € from the Green Fund | **OOA AREA OF ACTION:** Marine pollution



09

MANAGEMENT AND SPATIAL/LAND USE PLANNING OF THE GREEK MARINE PROTECTED AREAS.

Marine Protected Areas in Greece, covering 18.3% of the country's marine waters, are subject to a national protection regime with the aim of effectively protecting marine biodiversity and ecological values. Special environmental

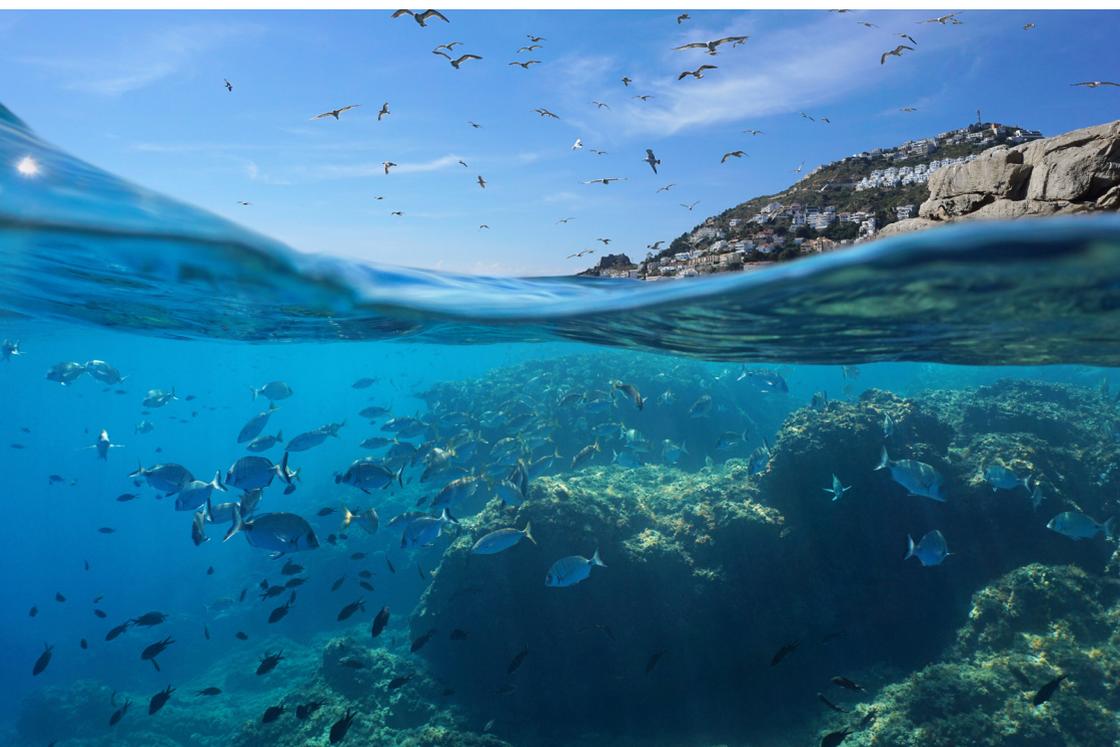
studies are under elaboration to deliver the necessary Management Plans and the Presidential Decrees for the terms and conditions of protection and land-use planning in those areas.

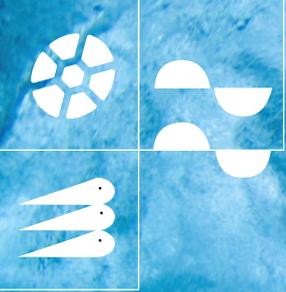
IMPLEMENTING BODY/BENEFICIARY: Ministry of Environment and Energy

AREA: East Mediterranean Sea

DURATION: 2 years (2024-2025) | **BUDGET:** 6.7 million € from cohesion funds

OOA AREA OF ACTION: Marine protected areas





10

BY 2030 AT LEAST 12 HARBORS WILL BE EQUIPPED WITH COLD IRONING.

Twelve harbors in Greek islands and on the mainland will be equipped with cold ironing and they will simultaneously be transformed into energy hubs. The cost will be covered by the Decarbonization Fund for the Greek Islands, the Connecting Europe Facility and, if necessary, by the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility.

IMPLEMENTING BODY: Ministry of Environment and Energy and Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy

BENEFICIARY: Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy

AREA: East Mediterranean Sea | **DURATION:** 6 years (2025-2030)

BUDGET: 500 million € from the Decarbonization Fund for the Greek Islands, the Connecting Europe Facility, and, if necessary, by the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility.

OOA AREA OF ACTION: The ocean – climate nexus

11

BY 2030, REDUCE BY 50% PLASTIC LITTER AND MICROPLASTIC BY 30% COMPARED TO 2019.

The best available methodologies will be used to estimate the **quantity of plastic and microplastic marine litter**, taking also into account existing data such as the ones available by **UNEP/MAP**. All existing cleaning actions that now take place in a fragmented manner being the initiative of private companies, NGOs, municipalities, associations etc. referring both to cleaning beaches, the sea bottom and the sea column, will be brought under the umbrella of a **National Action Plan** that will be elaborated by the **Ministry of Environment and Energy** with the technical and financial support of the **Hellenic Recycling Agency**. The National Action Plan will seek to incorporate and support successful existing “bottom up” voluntary initiatives including “fishing for litter” initiatives. The Action Plan will also focus in mobilizing private funds to support further cleaning operations in a concerted manner as well

as education and awareness raising and stakeholder involvement in addressing the multifaceted challenge of marine plastic litter which has important environmental, social and economic adverse impacts on local communities.

Digital applications for beach monitoring will also be developed to optimize the utilization of Greek beaches and ensure compliance during their exploitation and use. Through these applications, citizens will be able to check whether there are legally or illegally placed umbrellas and sunbeds on each beach. Similarly, offenders who illegally occupy beaches or pollute the environment will be held accountable. By developing these applications, better utilization and exploitation of Greek coasts will be achieved and they will be protected from misuse and environmental degradation.

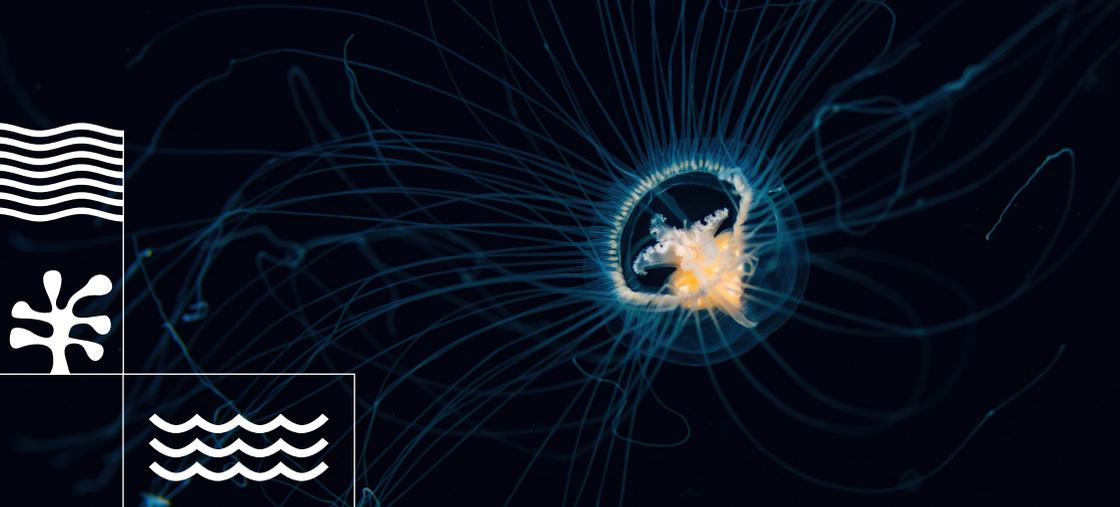
IMPLEMENTING BODY/BENEFICIARY:

Ministry of Environment and Energy / Hellenic Recycling Agency / Ministry of Digital Governance

AREA: East Mediterranean Sea | **DURATION:** 7 years (2024-2030)

BUDGET: 10 million € from Hellenic Recycling Agency

OOA AREA OF ACTION: Marine pollution



12

REHABILITATION OF 30% OF SPECIFIC MARINE HABITAT TYPES BY 2030 BY INCREASING THE LEVEL OF PROTECTION OF MPAS, BY INCREASING THEIR SIZE AND BY HORIZONTAL MEASURES.

IMPLEMENTING BODY/BENEFICIARY: Ministry of Environment and Energy/NECCA
AREA: East Mediterranean Sea
DURATION: 6 years (2025-2030)
BUDGET: 1 million € from cohesion funds
OOO AREA OF ACTION: Marine Protected Areas

13

ESTABLISH MONITORING AND EARLY WARNING SYSTEM FOR PASSING BY SHIPS TO IDENTIFY ON TIME LARGE MARINE MAMMALS so that the ships that are in the Greek territorial waters slow down and avoid collision with them in the area between Kythira, Cape Tainaro and Cape Maleas.

IMPLEMENTING BODY: Ministry of Environment and Energy/NECCA
BENEFICIARY: NECCA with the assistance of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy
AREA: East Mediterranean Sea
DURATION: 4.5 years (2024-2028)
BUDGET: 3 million € from private sponsors, NECCA and the Green Fund.
OOO AREA OF ACTION: Marine Protected Areas

14

RATIFICATION OF THE AGREEMENT UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA ON THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF MARINE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF AREAS BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION (BBNJ) PRIOR TO THE UN OCEAN CONFERENCE IN 2025.

Greece commits to pursue the ratification of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) prior to the UN Ocean

Conference in 2025. This commitment is a contribution to the global effort to enter into force the BBNJ Agreement by the UN Ocean Conference in mid 2025.

IMPLEMENTING BODY/BENEFICIARY: Ministry of Foreign Affairs
AREA: - | **DEADLINE:** 13 June 2025
BUDGET: - (statutory measure) | **OOO AREA OF ACTION:** Sustainable Blue Economy

15

FLEET REPLACEMENT PLAN TO REDUCE THE ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT OF PASSENGER SHIPPING

The passenger shipping industry is of the utmost importance for Greece as it connects **116 inhabited islands** with a population of **~1.4 million (14.6% of the total Greek population)** to the mainland. Passenger shipping also plays a key role in providing humanitarian assistance, civil protection and strategic defense as well as promoting economic development through tourism and employment. However, this important pillar of the Greek economy is under **increasing pressure due to several emerging challenges**, such as the aging of the fleet, the need to align the sector with EU transport policies, strategic priorities and sustainability goals. Preparation of an analytical study and

strategy, as well as the development of a financing mechanism for the gradual renewal of the country's passenger ship fleet. The study will identify the relevant vessel upgrade needs and the investment horizon, the financing needs of operators and the potential revenue to be generated from the renewal plan, determine the infrastructure renewal that will need to take place in the ports in order to support the operation of the new vessels and will develop a financing mechanism to facilitate operators' access to financing to smoothen the green transition of the sector as it moves towards reduced GHG emissions. The implementation of the investment will be completed by June 30, 2025.

IMPLEMENTING BODY/BENEFICIARY: Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy
AREA: East Mediterranean Sea | **DURATION:** 2 years (2024-2025)
BUDGET: 1.25 million € from RRF
OOO AREA OF ACTION: Sustainable blue economy (Greening Shipping)





16

COASTAL PASSENGER SHIPPING FLEET RENEWAL AND THE COMMISSIONING OF LOW-EMISSION SHIPS ON PUBLIC SERVICE OBLIGATION COASTAL CONNECTIONS (STATE-SUBSIDIZED ROUTES)

In the National Programme “Transport 2021-2027” provision has been made for improving the accessibility of the islands by promoting coastal transport. The action, funded with 80 million euros under European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) includes the strengthening of (public service obligation) coastal connections (by 2029) using “green” ships (that do not

use fossil fuels for propulsion), in order to achieve appropriate inter-island maritime connections between insular destinations, with particular regard to remote islands. The action aims to promote territorial and social cohesion in a sustainable way, promoting the renewal of the fleet and the development of low-emission ro-ro passenger ships.

IMPLEMENTING BODY/BENEFICIARY: Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy
AREA: East Mediterranean Sea | **DURATION:** 60 months (2024-2029)
BUDGET: 80 million € from the National Programme “Transport 2021-2027”
OOO AREA OF ACTION: Sustainable blue economy (Greening Shipping)

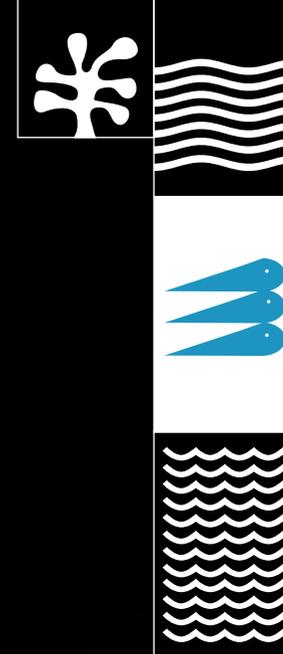
17

UPGRADING OF THE INSTALLATIONS OF THE HELLENIC MARINE RESEARCH CENTER

The project includes:

- The construction of a **new office and laboratory building** in Anavyssos,
- The construction of a new building for **underwater vehicles** at ELKETHE facilities in Gournes, Heraklion, Crete,
- The construction of a **new pumping station building** at ELKETHE facilities in Crete,
- The construction of a **new office building - laboratories** in Crete,
- The supply of the necessary **seawater processing equipment**,
- The supply of **Recirculating Aquaculture Systems (RAS)**, which will ensure absolute biosecurity in the management of genetic selection generators, to avoid their loss by pathogenic organisms,
- The supply of **equipment for the facilities** of culture collections, biotechnological applications, cryopreservation, data center, and laboratory equipment,
- The supply of an **underwater remote-operated vehicle (Remotely Operated Vehicle, ROV)**, which, in combination with the **HELLENIC MARINE RESEARCH CENTER** fleet, will contribute to a better understanding of the marine environment, the impact of climate change and its response, as well as to the investigation and response to marine disasters phenomena.

IMPLEMENTING BODY/BENEFICIARY: Ministry of Development
AREA: East Mediterranean Sea | **DURATION:** 3 years (2024-2026)
BUDGET: 15 million € from RRF
OOO AREA OF ACTION: The ocean – climate nexus



18

PROMOTE THE COUNTRY'S DIVING AND UNDERWATER TOURISM

The project "Diving and underwater tourism" concerns the protection and promotion of the underwater environment and the utilization of the comparative advantages (natural and cultural) that the country has based on the principles of sustainability, as well as the improvement of the overall tourism product of the Country by strengthening its diversification and the development of products of special interest. The promotion of the underwater environment through the creation and upgrading of diving/underwater parks is not only aimed at business profit, as diving parks show mild profitability, but in the protection and promotion of the underwater environment, in the local economy and employment, in the exploitation of the comparative

advantages (natural and cultural) that the country has, in accordance with the principles of sustainability, and in the addition of a new activity to the Greek tourism product portfolio that is appropriate for the whole year. The main objectives of this project are the protection and promotion of the underwater environment and the optimal utilization of the comparative natural and cultural advantages of the country under the principles of sustainability and sustainability, so that Greece becomes a pan-European diving destination.

The scope of the project includes:

- **The upgrading** of the infrastructure and equipment of existing marine/underwater parks to integrate tourist activities and recreational diving services, with the aim of meeting the advanced market requirements and maintaining the international competitiveness of the relevant tourism product, as well as the further protection of underwater areas.
- **Elaboration of studies for the development of digital technologies and digitization** of all the infrastructures/services of the existing diving/underwater parks with the aim of future digital mapping and recording them on tourism promotion and promotion platforms.
- **Elaboration of studies, such as spatial plans, environmental studies, business plans or digital technology development studies**, for new diving parks by potential management and operating agencies with the aim of licensing them.
- **Creation of infrastructure and purchase of equipment** in new diving parks in accordance with the specifications to be defined by the relevant call for expressions of interest.
- **Creation of a digital platform** to capture and link the diving and underwater tourism product of the country.

IMPLEMENTING BODY/BENEFICIARY: Ministry of Tourism

AREA: East Mediterranean Sea | **DURATION:** 3 years (2024-2026)

BUDGET: 22 million € from RRF | **OOO AREA OF ACTION:** Sustainable blue economy

19

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EUROPEAN REFERENCE CENTRE FOR THE WELFARE OF AQUATIC ANIMALS

The European Union Reference Centre for the welfare of aquatic animals **will support activities in the area of official controls carried out to enforce requirements for the welfare of those animals.** The 3 existing EU reference centers for animal welfare cover pigs, poultry and other small-farmed animals, as well as ruminants and equines. Taking into account that EU reference centers are organized by species, the activities of this specific centre will cover the entire production chain from farming, transport to slaughter/killing.

The main activities of the center will concern the **'aquaculture animals'** meaning any aquatic animal at all its life stages, including eggs, reared in a farm, and or any aquatic animal from the wild intended for a farm.

The centre will provide scientific and technical expertise to relevant national scientific support networks or bodies. More specifically, the center will provide technical support and coordinated assistance to the Commission and Member States by carrying out scientific and technical studies, as well as conducting training courses and disseminating research findings and information on technical innovations.

Hence, the centre will support activities in the area of official controls carried out to enforce requirements for the welfare of those animals and it will help stakeholders understand the rules, how to comply with these rules, as well as the possible control methods to be used by national authorities.

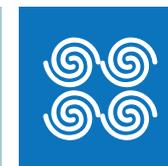
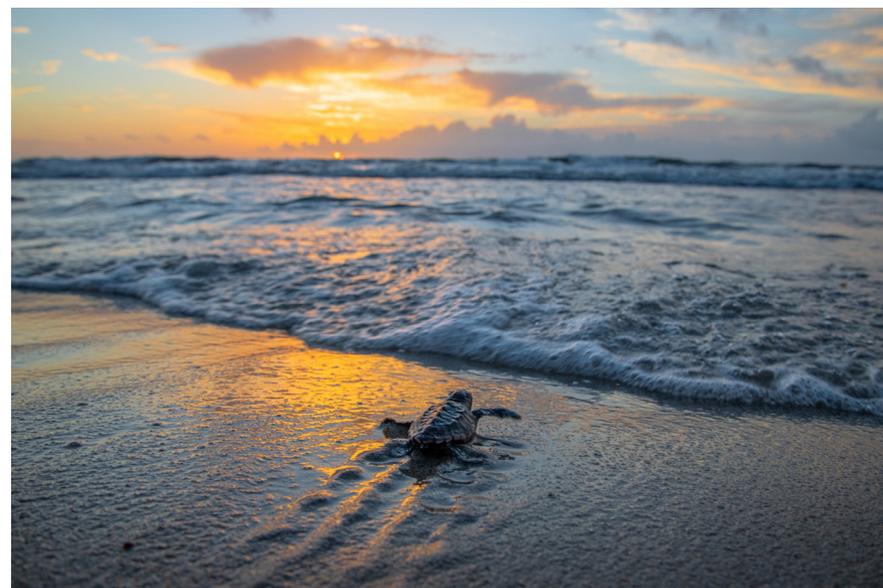
IMPLEMENTING BODY/BENEFICIARY: University of Crete, Biology Center of the Czech Academy of Sciences, University of Barcelona, Ministry of Rural Development and Food

AREA: All European marine waters

DURATION: at least 7 years

BUDGET: 255.000 € from EU funds

OOO AREA OF ACTION: Sustainable Blue Economy



20

ENCOURAGING A SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY IN COASTAL, ISLAND AND INTERNAL REGIONS AND PROMOTING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF FISHING AND AQUACULTURE COMMUNITIES

These measures are based on the EU Regulation with the aim to ensure that **communities in fishing or aquaculture areas better exploit and benefit from the opportunities** offered by the sustainable blue economy, capitalizing on and strengthening environmental, cultural, social and human resources. Those strategies are ranged from those which focus on fisheries or aquaculture to broader strategies directed at the diversification of local communities.

More particularly, the actions are described as follows:

- Significant economic and social importance of fisheries, aquaculture and processing to local coastal communities
- Production of high-quality products both for the local and international markets
- Simplified procedures for starting fishing tourism
- Enhanced complementarity of local intervention actions with interventions of other financial instruments

Therefore, this action has been developed in order to:

(a) maximize the participation of fishery and aquaculture sectors in the sustainable development of coastal and inland

fisheries and aquaculture areas;

(b) ensure that local communities fully exploit and benefit from the opportunities offered by maritime, coastal and inland water development and,

(c) help small and declining fishing ports to maximise their marine potential by developing a diversified infrastructure.

Hence, this commitment shall cover interventions that contribute to enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and to fostering the sustainable development of fishing and aquaculture communities.

In particular:

- **Interventions to protect** the health of environment (recycling, energy efficiency, use of RES) and the biodiversity of coastal areas,
- **Development of complementary activities** under the prism of the local blue economy, for example in tourism (fishing, experiential, diving, etc.), environmental services and cultural maritime activities.
- **Development and production** of new added-value products and promotion of local traditional products.
- **Informing and raising awareness** of the public and stakeholders connected to Natura 2000.

IMPLEMENTING BODY/BENEFICIARY: Ministry of Rural development and Food

AREA: East Mediterranean Sea

DURATION: -

BUDGET: at least 70 million € from EU findings

OOO AREA OF ACTION: Sustainable Blue Economies, Sustainable Fisheries



21

PERMANENT WITHDRAWAL OF FISHING LICENSE OF BOAT SEINES (SB)

Within the frame of fish stock protection, Greece will permanently withdraw the fishing license of boat seines.

IMPLEMENTING BODY/BENEFICIARY: Ministry of Rural Development and Food

AREA: East Mediterranean Sea

DURATION: -

BUDGET: 3.050.000 € from de minimis state aid

OOO AREA OF ACTION: Sustainable Fisheries




OUR OCEAN
GREECE - APRIL 15-17, 2024
AN OCEAN OF POTENTIAL



ourocean2024.gov.gr