



IEF WINTER NEWSLETTER 2023



Mediterranean Monk Seal
(*Monachus monachus*)



Archipelagos © Xenophon Chaldas

European Monk Seals are roaming more freely Ionian waters, after a heavy touristic season. Their presence underscores the importance of sustainable practices and conservation in preserving the environment, ensuring the survival of this majestic species and the marine ecosystem in the Ionian region.

NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



This October, IEF embarked on an exciting new chapter with Victoria Turner passing the torch of Executive Director to Simon Karythis. A native of Corfu, Simon's blend of Greek heritage and British education positions gives him a unique perspective from which to steer the IEF towards becoming an independent Greek entity in the upcoming year.

Having spent his formative years in Corfu, Simon possesses a deep passion for the region's stunning and biodiverse nature. Additionally, being already part of the civil society grants him a deep understanding of the socio-political dynamics that shape the Ionian islands and Greece in general, and therefore the discernment needed to make informed decisions and take purposeful actions.

Simon has a BSc in Zoology, MSc, and PhD in Marine Ecology, equipping him with the analytical skills to address a wide spectrum of environmental issues pertinent to the IEF's work in the Ionian Archipelago. Of particular relevance is his postdoctoral research with its focus on the repercussions of non-native species on invaded ecosystems and the potential for human structures to facilitate their negative effects.

We extend our best wishes to Simon as he embarks on this new role and our heartfelt gratitude to Victoria.

NEW GRANTS

Monk seals in Northern Corfu



Building upon findings of a prior IEF funded project that systematically recorded two caves in northwest Corfu, confirming their use by two seals, this project aims to continue monitoring caves on the northern coast of Corfu. The objective is to further identify, assess and catalogue these endangered species and their activity in the area over the winter months. Additionally, the project intends to expand its recording and monitoring efforts to identify the presence of monk seals in north Corfu.

Pelekas Green Corner Recycling Centre



Amy and Stathis are local residents who have decided to take local recycling into their own hands. They have already succeeded in installing new bins around the village and surrounding area and are in the process of working with local businesses to develop their recycling practices. This project's primary objective is to establish a Recycling Centre dedicated to the collection of plastic, aluminium, metal, glass, cooking oil and cardboard/paper.

Beyond recycling materials, their vision extends to uniting people and fostering a sense of community that includes local businesses, residents, tourists and youth, all working together to make a positive impact and set a shining example for their village and the island as a whole.

CURRENT PROJECT UPDATES!

Depeche Mode & Hublot funding SIN.PRAXI

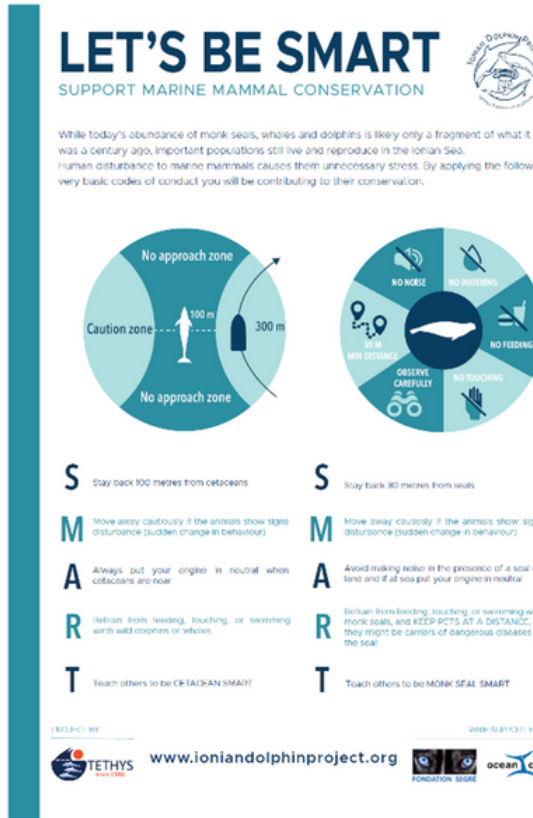


With 70,000,000 kg of waste generated annually in Corfu, the island faces a waste crisis with its landfill full for two years, resulting in costly waste shipping to other Greek sites.

The Sin.Praxi community project in northeast Corfu addresses this issue, offering infrastructure and education to divert waste from landfills through reduction, reuse, recycling, composting, and circular economies.

Starting this year, Sin Praxi is receiving support from Depeche Mode & Hublot as one of seven projects across seven different countries dedicated to combating plastic pollution. This partnership marks an exciting expansion of its efforts, introducing innovative waste management, education and a circular economy project enabling the local community to protect its patch. Beginning in November, a Community Garden and Composting Site will be built with an outdoor learning environment to facilitate composting workshops and offer a welcoming space for the local community.

Greek Sustainable Sailing Alliance: Sustainable Sailing Pack



This summer the first phase of the project “Greek sustainable Sailing Alliance” was completed with great success. This landmark project was launched in June, on World Ocean Day, with a raft of charter companies in Lefkada, and in July in Corfu, to bring sustainability to the fore. A simple eye-catching Sustainable Sailing Guide is now found on 300 sailing boats in the Ionian Region.

[Download guide here](#)

SAVE ERIMITIS Campaign

Erimitis and the Bioparks Presentation



The IEF remains committed to supporting the Association Erimitis Plous and the Save Erimitis Campaign to secure the future of its natural beauty. In September, as part of the broader exploration of alternative approaches and management plans for Erimitis, the IEF invited and hosted specialists on the BioPark approach John Regan, Professor Sir Drummond Bowen and Dr Mike Maunder. They spent nearly a week in Corfu, engaging in discussions with the local community, visiting and exploring various places. This collaborative effort culminated in a presentation and discussion titled “ErimitisFuture, exploring the idea of the BioPark”, held in Sinies.

The entire presentation was centred around the concept of transitioning from extractive tourism to regenerative tourism, one that celebrates and enriches the natural environment and local culture. In this perspective, Erimitis could serve as the catalyst for a broader island-wide transformation in tourism.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Albania Overboard



Our fantastic 6th Albania Overboard event went swimmingly! More than fifty swimmers crossed “the straights” and swam over three kilometres between the two countries, from the Albanian Coast (Examili) to Corfu (Agios Stefanos).

The IEF is immensely grateful to Nick Lemis and Nick Cookson - Villa Collective, and to all those who helped us raise with “Just Giving” almost €20,000- for the support of four of our projects in marine life protection. Special thanks should go also to all of those who assisted in the organisation and safe running of the event including: Kassios Dias, Damianos Bar, Hellenic Coast Guard

Introducing Regenerative Farming Practices on Paxos



In Corfu, improper land-use and land degradation processes affecting the island's soil resources. Regenerative agriculture is a vital solution to this problem through sustainable farming and grazing practices that can rebuild soil organic matter.

IEF supported a Regenerative Farming workshop by the Southern Lights group on the amazing farm of Dr. Kavvadias for local farmers. The event was a great success. The Southern Lights team provided valuable insights into the ethos, practices and real-life examples of regenerative farming. Their aim is to encourage a shift towards farming operations that prioritise the restoration of soil health, plant health and the health of the overall ecosystem throughout Greece.

Screening At The Chapel in Bruton



The 3rd Villa Alliance event will be the screening of the award-winning documentary Mediterranean: life under siege At The Chapel in Bruton on the 4th of December. Guests can expect a fantastic Greek-themed event filled with music, drinks, delectable nibbles, an insightful presentation, and a captivating film. It is a chance to watch this moving documentary and chase away the winter chill with a dose of Greek sunshine – it's going to be an unforgettable evening!

Special thanks to our kind and generous host - Scott Williams' Villas

The ever increasing number of proposals we receive for conservation projects across the Ionian region far exceeds our funding capacity so please do help us to support them!

[Donate](#)



OUR NETWORK

Ionian Environment Foundation is part of Conservation Collective, global network of local foundations funding effective grass-roots conservation initiatives to protect the environment, restore nature and safeguard against climate change.

Find the Ionian Environment Foundation on social media or visit our website:



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