



10 YEARS REPORT | 2016-2026

*A WATCHFUL EYE FOR THE PRESERVATION OF
THE AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS*

THESSALONIKI, 2026



This document is in consistency with iSea's duties and obligations under its internal framework of actions. Written by: Anastasia Charitou, Ioannis Giovos, Ioanna Tzioga, and Olympia Koukouvetsiou

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Revised by all iSea partners and signed by the Legal Representative, Anastasia Charitou

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-FOUNDER

Marking iSea's tenth anniversary invites reflection on a journey of purpose and perseverance. Born as an experiment during Greece's financial crisis, our mission was twofold: to pioneer a multidisciplinary approach to aquatic conservation, and to champion a progressive work culture that could set a new standard.

A passionate team of young researchers turned this vision into action against the odds. That courageous leap has flourished into recognised Mediterranean conservation leadership, guided by an unwavering founding creed: to bridge rigorous science with public awareness and decisive advocacy, working hand-in-hand with local communities.

One of my deepest rewards has been witnessing our team grow, both professionally and personally. Their collective journey has created a significant and lasting impact on marine conservation.

This sustained impact is rooted in our core values of collaboration and transparency. We owe immense gratitude to our many partners and supporters who have helped turn our shared vision into reality. This report captures part of that shared story, though some chapters are written in moments too profound for words.

Our first decade proved what is possible through passion and principle. The next will be about leading with even greater ambition.



IOANNIS GIOVOS
CO-FOUNDER

A white handwritten signature of Ioannis Giovos, located in the bottom right corner of the page.

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WHO WE ARE

OUR VALUES

COLLABORATION

TRANSPARENCY

SCIENTIFICITY

EQUITY

OUR VISION

A healthy Mediterranean Sea supporting the sustainable development and resilience of local coastal communities

OUR MISSION

Preserve and restore the Mediterranean Sea together with local communities

PILLARS OF WORK

AQUATIC
LITTER

HUMAN &
AQUATIC
ECOSYSTEMS

MARINE
PROTECTED
AREAS

VULNERABLE
SPECIES

A 10-YEAR JOURNEY

iSea participated in the Angel Shark Mediterranean Action Plan, the first initiative to develop a roadmap to restore the species in the region

2019

iSea was founded, in Thessaloniki, by a group of young, but experienced, people of multidisciplinary expertises, dedicated to the protection of marine ecosystems

2016

iSea accepted as the 12th member of the European Elasmobranch Association

2018

2019

First Records of species detected in the context of *Is it alien to you? Share it!* project:

- *Matuta victor* (Cyprus)
- *Goniobranchus obsoletus* (Cyprus)
- *Sillago suezensis* (Greece)
- *Lutjanus argentimaculatus* (Greece)
- *Nemipterus randalli* (Greece)
- *Pomadasystris stridens* (Greece)

2017

iSea's first funded project *Only together we can do it!* was implemented focused on environmental education and awareness raising for people with disabilities

2018

2018

MARINE ECOMED, the first EU funded project proposal with iSea's participation

First Records of species detected in the context of *Is it alien to you? Share it!* project:

- *Abudefduf sexfasciatus* (Mediterranean)
- *Acanthurus sohal* (Mediterranean)
- *Acetabularia caliculus* (Greece)
- *Lagocephalus guentheri* (Greece)
- *Penaeus aztecus* (Albania)
- *Torquigener flavimaculosus* (Libya)

In 2020, iSea relocated into new and bigger headquarters

2020

iSea in collaboration with IUCN Shark Specialist Group updated the national checklist of chondrichthyan species of Greece

2020

iSea started working on projects focused on marine mammals and critical habitats for the 1st time

2021

2020

iSea, in collaboration with Goulandris Natural History Museum (GNHM), became responsible for the implementation of iNaturalist GR

2021

iSea undergone its 1st fundamental transformations of major pillars with the aim to broaden its scope and increase its impact. The new pillars decided were Aquatic Litter, Citizen Science, Human and Aquatic Ecosystems and Vulnerable species

2020

iSea started *Angel Shark Project* in Libya

2022

iSea established a new fieldbase in Amvrakikos Wetlands National Park, the biggest Greek wetland. In a single year, 132 sharks and rays tagged with conventional tagging

A 10-YEAR JOURNEY

iSea contributed in the delineation of 4 ISRAs, 1 cISRA and 3 Aol in Greece, Cyprus and Libya

2023

iSea formulated its first 5-year strategic plan

2024

iSea expanded significantly implementing 24 projects in Greece, Cyprus, Libya, France and the Balkans

2022

2024

2023

iSea's Conservation Officer was subcontracted by the Ministry of Environment to produce the assessments of sharks and rays in the new National Red List

Amvrakikos Alliance was created with the aim to contribute to the effective management of the Amvrakikos Gulf National Park and assist the work of the responsible Management Body by creating a long-term partnership among different stakeholders

2023

2022

iSea launched the Annual Students' Scholarship with the aim to support their participation in International Conferences by covering their attendance expenses

iSea implemented 75 clean-ups in one single year around Greece

For the first time, iSea hosted the European Elasmobranch Association Conference in Greece

2024

iSea started monitoring shark fisheries in the Mediterranean coast of Egypt

2025

iSea established a new fieldbase in Lemnos island in the North Aegean

2025

2024

iSea encountered, tagged and photographed a live Angelshark for the 1st time in Greece

2025

iSea established a new internal Capacity Building and Leadership Scheme

2024

Formicula islet, in the Inner Ionian Archipelago, strictly protected after 3-year long advocacy from iSea and project partners

2025

iSea was involved in the preparation of the National Restoration Plan, in collaboration with the Greek Biotope Wetland Center

A 10 YEAR JOURNEY

MARCH 2016



Ioannis preparing our first office in Thessaloniki

DECEMBER 2016



Introducing iSea to other NGOs in Thessaloniki

JUNE 2016



Celebrating World Environment Day for the first time at Thessaloniki waterfront

OCTOBER 2017



iSea's first participation in the EEA

June 2018



Analysis of the first *Acanthurus sohal* individual found in the Mediterranean sea

JANUARY 2017



Ioannis and Nikos visiting Kapani fish market in Thessaloniki

February 2017



iSea in Iceland together with Fair Trade Hellas visiting Iceland's Responsible Fisheries

JANUARY 2018



NGO Capacity-building seminar in Athens at HIGAS

JUNE 2019



Fani during SANI Eco Days

JUNE 2019



Citizen Science Summer School in Chalkidiki

JANUARY 2019



Maria recording benthic litter within Fishing for Litter project

JUNE 2019



Fani during SANI Eco Days

SEPTEMBER 2021



Training fishers on proper handling and releasing techniques with the use of dummies for the first time

JULY 2020



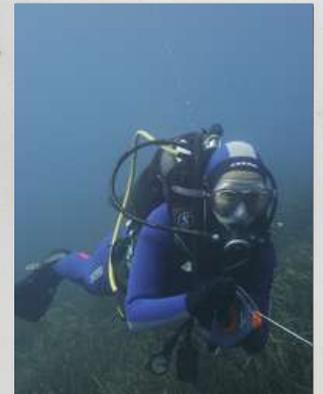
Ioanna meeting iSea team for the first time as a volunteer

SEPTEMBER 2020

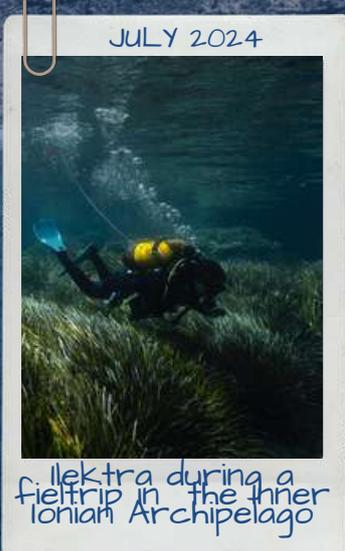


Looking for a lake in Evros for microplastic sample collection

NOVEMBER 2021



Dimitra mapping the *Posidonia oceanica* meadows in Erimitis for the first time



THE POWER OF WORKING TOGETHER

I first met iSea team in the summer of 2018, in Kavala, during a workshop on vulnerable species. The following year, I became an ambassador of the *Fishing for Litter* project, which A. C. Laskaridis Charitable Foundation and iSea manage together ever since.

At the same time, we collaborated on many other projects, such as *obSERVING NATURE*, and of course on the detailed recording of rays and sharks. As a result, my fishing vessel now has side doors for the easier release of bycaught vulnerable species.

I remember that our first interaction was not friendly, as we disagreed strongly... until we eventually found our own way of communicating.

At first, it was difficult for them to get close to and understand us, the fishers. For us, it was difficult to accept the new data and practices they were proposing.

However, after so many years, I think we have done quite well, not only as partners working toward a common goal, but also as good friends, and with some of them I would even dare to say, as family. And like all families, we have our good and bad moments. But what matters is that we move forward and find solutions through our shared goals and, of course, the trust we have managed to build over all these years.

Like all of us, I would like my work to be sustainable. Our sector is going through a major crisis, which is why I believe that if we continue to work together with daily, dedicated effort as a team, we will manage to overcome, not all challenges, but certainly some of them!

Our cooperation with the team at iSea began in 2021, when we took part in consultations regarding the proposed protection measures for Formicula islet. It has been a rewarding experience working together; their passion for what they do is an inspiration, and to be commended. While we share common goals, we approach them from different perspectives, our role being to offer high quality tourism experiences that honour and respect the extraordinary natural environment of this area. We look forward to continuing this collaboration with iSea, working together to preserve a wild and vibrant ecosystem that can be appreciated and valued by those who live and work here, as well as by the visitors who come to experience it. We strongly believe in close cooperation; one that respects both the natural environment and the diverse local businesses and livelihoods that depend on it.

JANE FLINDERS

GENERAL MANAGER OF "THE M/S CHRISTINA" CRUISE AND CHARTER BOAT, LEFKADA

DIMITRIS SAKATIS

REPRESENTATIVE OF "AGIA EIRINI" FISHING COOPERATIVE, KAVALA



I first met with iSea team when they came in touch with the representative of our community, asking us to take them onboard. At first, I was very hesitant, I didn't understand exactly what they wanted, and I do not like changes. However, my wife encouraged me to accept and help and that's how the collaboration began. So, over time, I also got to know more members of the team.

They join us onboard when we go fishing to monitor and measure the fish we catch. They also collect samples and tag some of the sharks and rays that are occasionally caught. Their favourites are the Angelsharks. Sometimes, when their work is done, they also help with sorting the catch, and I can assure you that they know how to do it.

I strive for a better future for the sea, which also means a better future for us fishers. In the past, fish were more abundant and larger, and that's what we want to see again. So, I collaborate with iSea wishing for practices that will mitigate our interaction with vulnerable species and increase our prospects.

VAGGELIS LAMRPOU

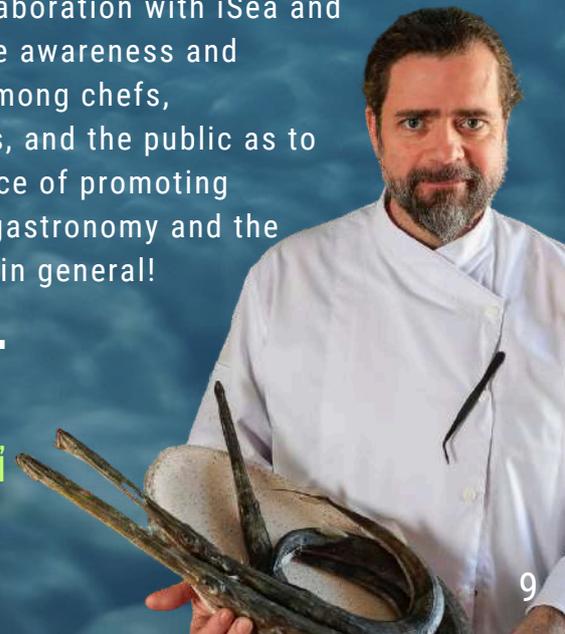
SMALL SCALE FISHER,
LEMNOS



I had the very great fortune to meet iSea team nearly ten years ago through a dear friend and iSea volunteer at that time, who invited me to one of their presentations in the City Hall in Thessaloniki. This friend knew I had a history working as a translator with an environmental NGO in Brazil, and that I had a special affinity for sustainability and human impact on sensitive ecosystems. I immediately clicked with the group. Several years later, I was invited to participate in the Blue Crab Festival as a chef and gastronomy ambassador for the *Pick the Alien* project, preparing dishes using the invasive species found in the Aegean Sea. This collaboration has continued through the years and has manifested in various forms, including my continued role and support as the chef and ambassador for promoting the marine invasive edible species among chefs and consumers, master classes for students, webinars, creating recipes for a cookbook, and through continuing community events and outreach. I look forward to a continued and dynamic collaboration with iSea and furthering the awareness and knowledge among chefs, restaurateurs, and the public as to the importance of promoting sustainable gastronomy and the work of iSea in general!

JONATHAN HARNETT

CHEF, RESTAURANT OWNER,
THESSALONIKI



THE POWER OF WORKING TOGETHER

I met the team of iSea team around three to four years ago, if I'm not mistaken, at the port where I usually moor in Preveza. They were collecting various data from fishing vessels, at some point we talked and they asked whether I would also be willing to provide information. That's how our collaboration started, and since then they join me on several fishing trips. At first, I didn't trust them... I've learned not to trust easily, that's just how I am as a person. However, the research that is taking place in our area interests me, and that is my main motivation. Over time, our relationship changed. We learned how to work together, and of course we are waiting for the research results. I would really like to learn about its findings. The main problems in our area are illegal fishing and fish farms. In addition to their research, I would like to see at least one of these two issues addressed with the help of iSea.



**DIMITRIS
TSALIKIDIS**

**SMALL SCALE FISHER,
AMVRAKIKOS WETLANDS
NATIONAL PARK**

Our association first met iSea team about five years ago, when members of the team visited our area to map the Posidonia seagrass meadows in Erimitis of Sinies, Corfu. From that time onward, an excellent collaboration began, built on mutual trust and friendship.

The main pillars of this collaboration have been, and continue to be, research aimed at highlighting the marine wealth and the unique biodiversity of Erimitis peninsula coastline in northeastern Corfu.

The results of the iSea team's research, so far, are impressive. Equally remarkable is the thorough scientific documentation and recording of their findings.

We also look forward to the results at the socio-economic level, regarding the value of Erimitis to the local economy and entrepreneurship.

These are essential data that will further raise awareness within Corfu's society, encouraging active participation in protecting Erimitis from the destructive and environmentally damaging coastal development that threatens it.

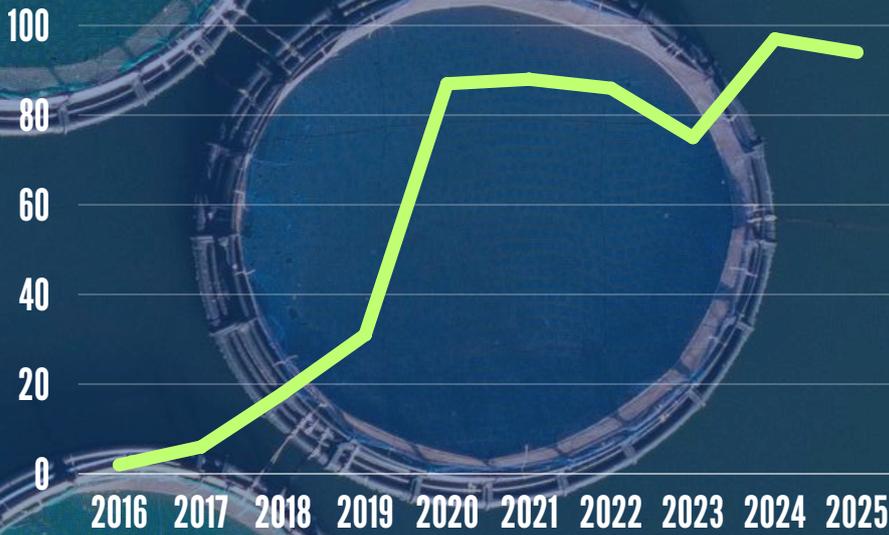
Wishing iSea many more creative and productive years ahead!



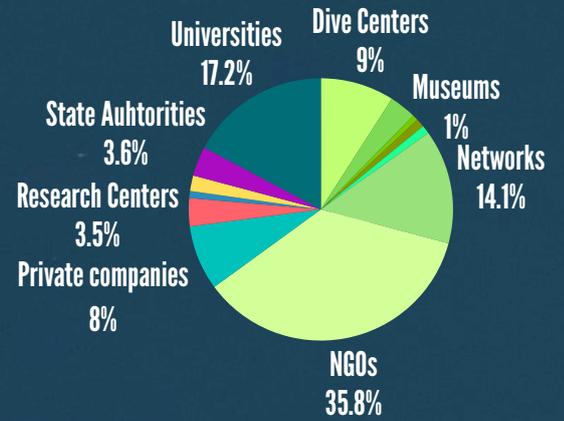
DIMITRIS FATIRAS

**PRESIDENT OF ERIMITIS
PLOUS ASSOCIATION, CORFU**

THE YEARLY GROWTH OF COLLABORATIONS



TYPES OF ENTITIES WE COLLABORATED WITH OVER THESE PAST 10 YEARS

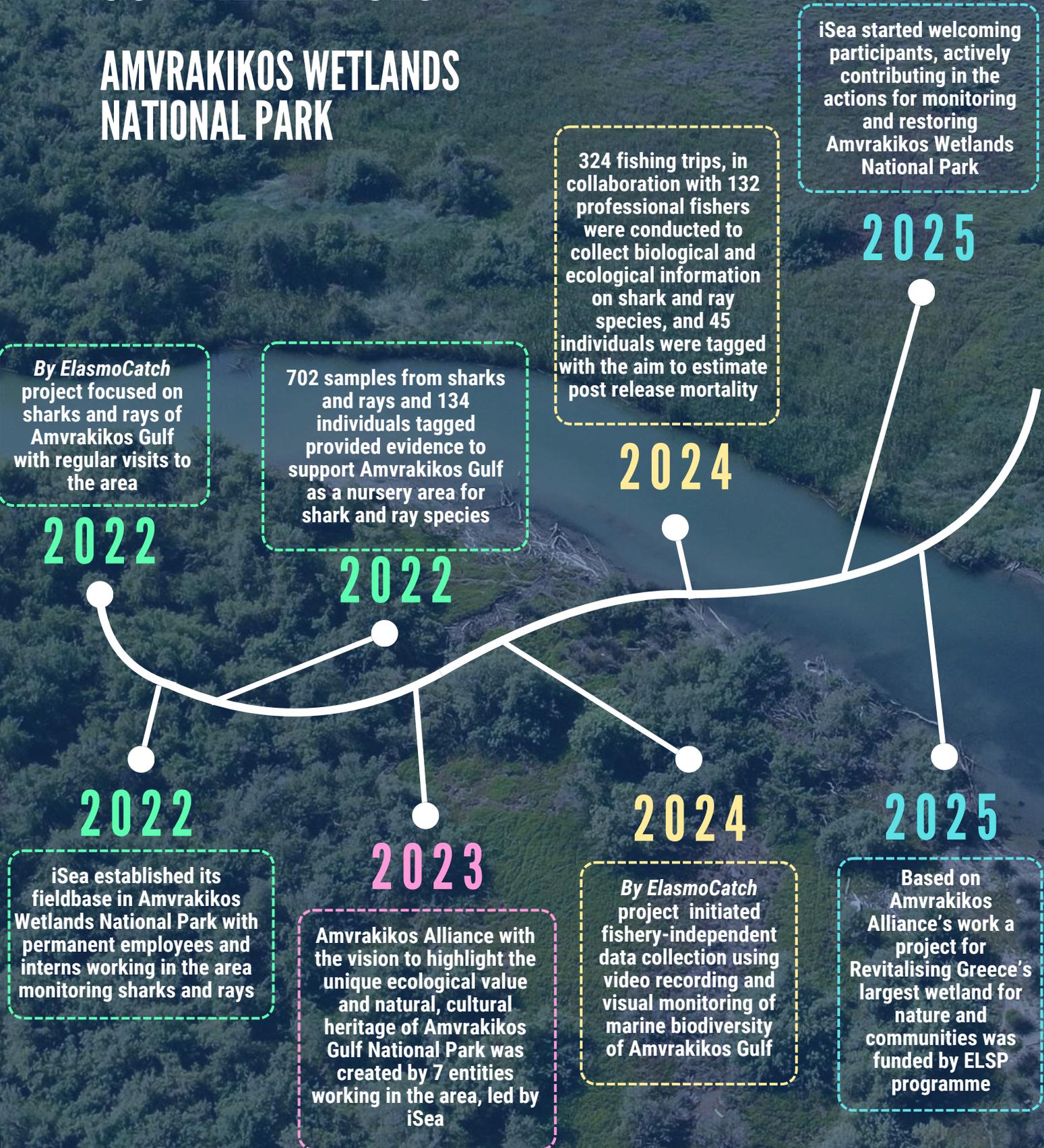


WHERE OUR COLLABORATORS ARE BASED: A 10-YEAR OVERVIEW BY CONTINENT

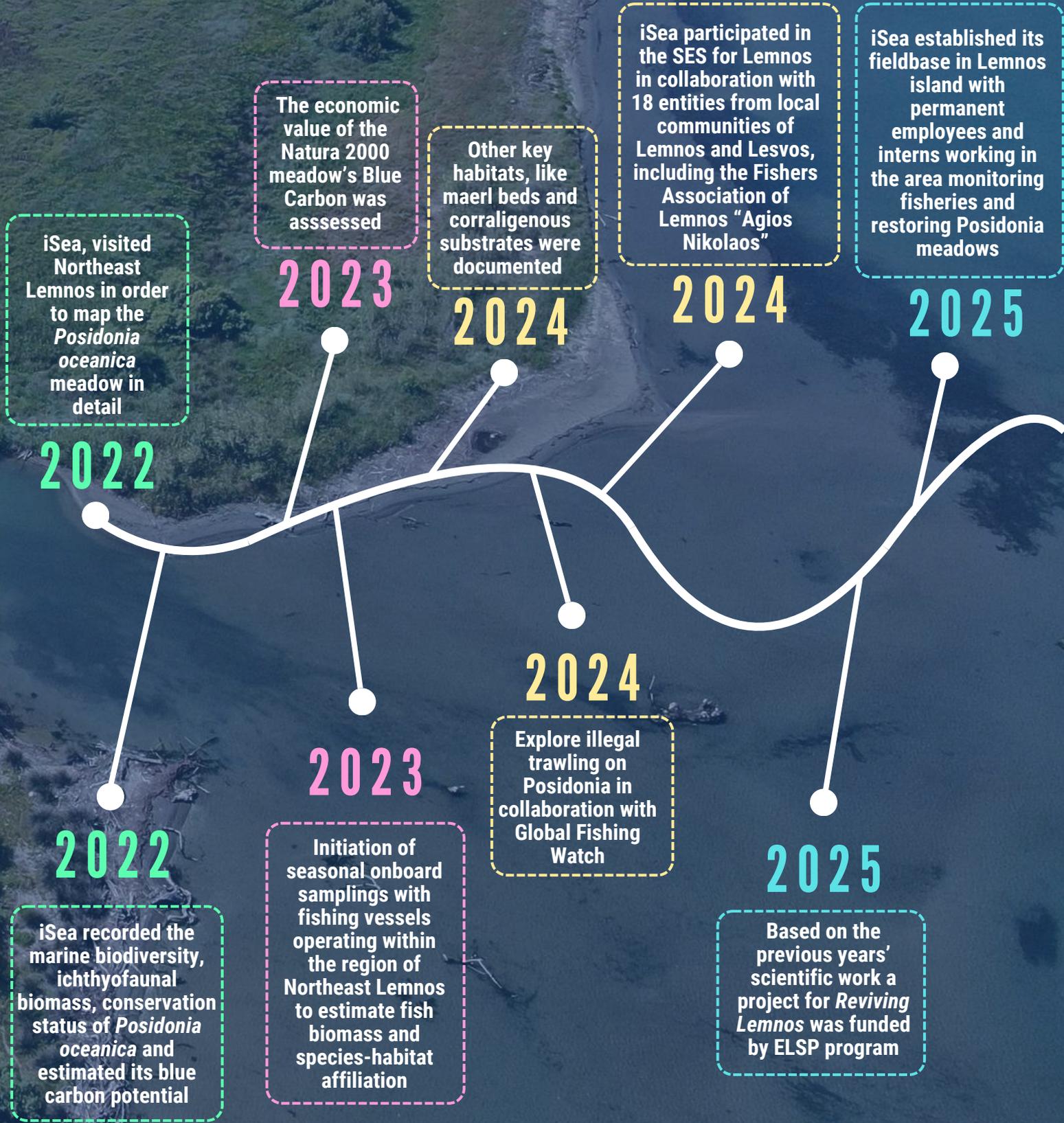


OUR FIELDBASES

AMVRAKIKOS WETLANDS NATIONAL PARK

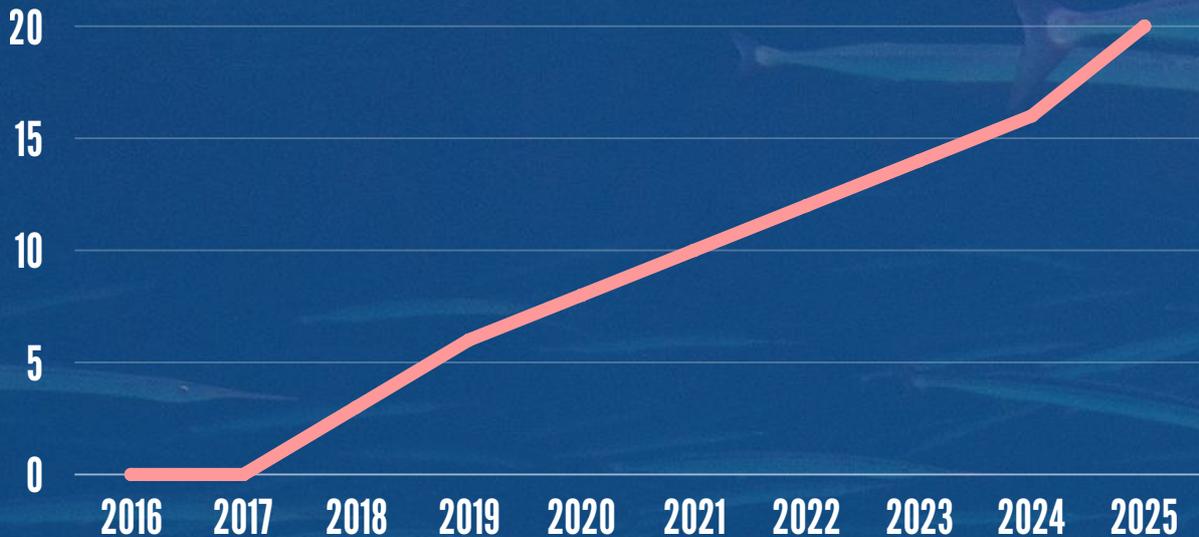


LEMNOS ISLAND



THE TEAM

YEARLY PERSONNEL GROWTH ACROSS 10 YEARS



20% progressed their collaboration with iSea starting off as interns

18% progressed their collaboration with iSea starting off as volunteers

At iSea we believe that our success is not only measured by successful planning or contribution to improved policies alone, but also through the strength, passion, and leadership of its people. This is why, in line with our Strategic Plan 2024-2029, we have developed iSea's **Capacity Building and Leadership Scheme**.

GOALS 2025-2029

1 Cultivate a new generation of Mediterranean environmental leaders equipped to drive conservation impact

2 Shape regional environmental policies through science-based advocacy and strategic partnerships

3 Build a world-class field research team delivering cutting-edge Mediterranean conservation science

4 Position iSea as a leading voice for Mediterranean environmental conservation

When iSea first appeared as an idea, to me it sounded like the most crazy and interesting thing I would ever try!

And here we are... celebrating 10 years of unstoppable, dedicated, pluralistic work with the most exciting part being that you are required to leave the office and be on the spot where things are actually taking place.

However, apart from the deep goal of making an impact, which will always motivate me, the people are the key to never feeling tired! iSea people can always surprise me with their ideas and motivation, but also

all the stakeholders that are involved, who become pieces of a beautiful puzzle. Their stories consist of the actual relation of the Mediterranean people with the marine environment!

Before becoming a member of iSea, in 2016, I had no clue of how an environmental NGO works, its purpose and impact. This idea of being part of something completely new, with people of my age and on topics that I love was intriguing. All the difficulties that come with starting something new, with me having the smallest experience back then, and finally making a significant impact, fills me with pride. All the people who collaborated with iSea in the past helped on building that organisation to last all these years. A decade passed like a breath and a blink of an eye! I wish iSea millions of breaths and millions of blinks, with the existing team and all the new members that will join us!



**ANASTASIA
CHARITOU**

**COMMUNICATION
OFFICER**

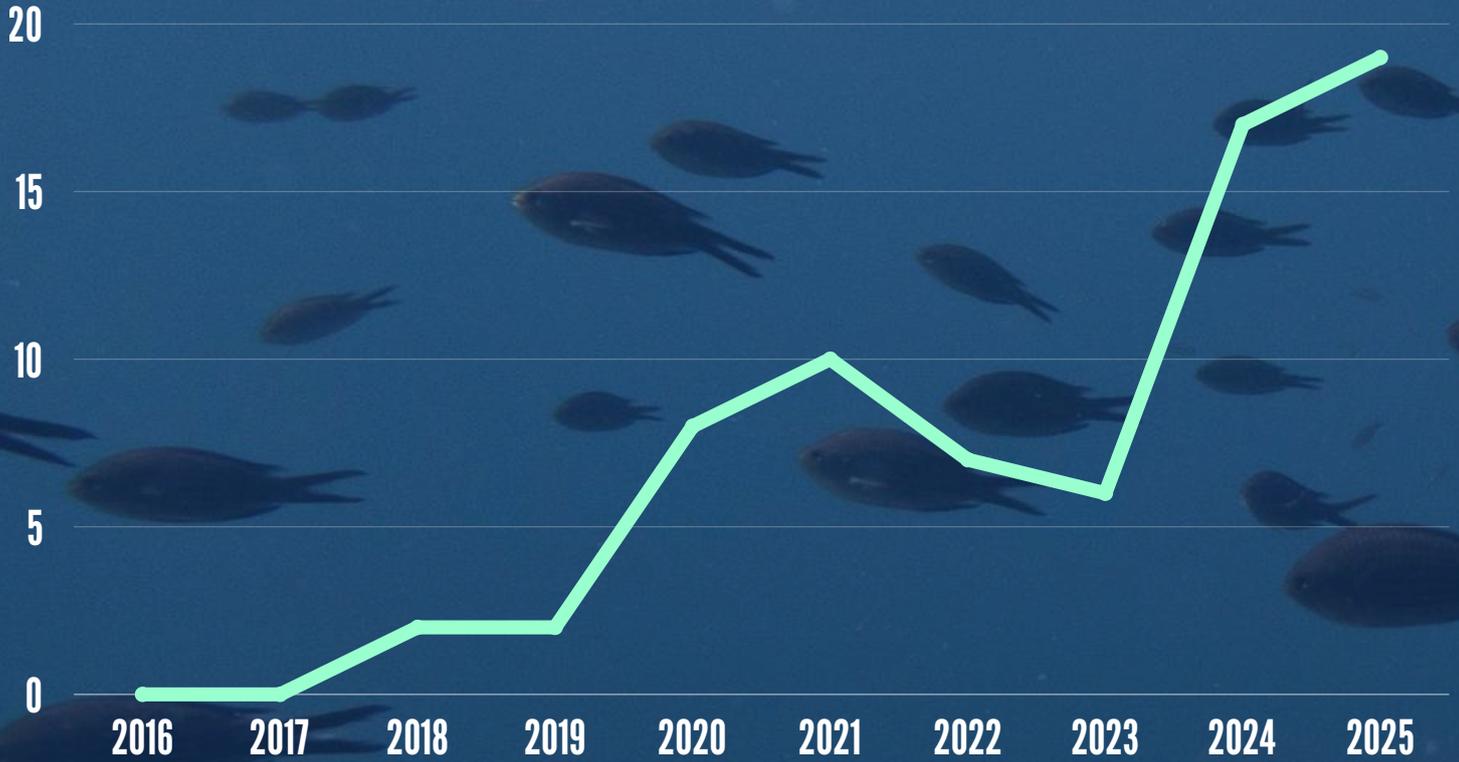


**NIKOLAOS
DOUMPAS**

**PROJECT
MANAGER**

INTERNSHIPS

NUMBER OF INTERNS PER YEAR



WHERE OUR INTERNS CAME FROM: A 10-YEAR OVERVIEW BY CONTINENT



71 INTERNS IN
10 YEARS

37 UNIVERSITIES

16 COUNTRIES

Since its inception, iSea has actively sought university partnerships for internships to engage the next generation of researchers and conservationists. In 2025, this initiative was formalised into a dedicated scheme and embedded within our Strategic Plan. I am proud to report significant progress, with placements growing from just 2 interns in 2018 to 19 in 2025, directly advancing our strategic objectives. What is also particularly important to encourage students and future conservationists, is the accompanying iSea Annual Students' Scholarships, a result of this effort, that has already enabled seven students to attend International Conferences. This structured investment is fundamental, since we are not merely running projects, but purposefully developing the future experts of our oceans.

**ALEX
ADAMIDIS**
ADMINISTRATIVE
ASSISTANT



RESEARCH

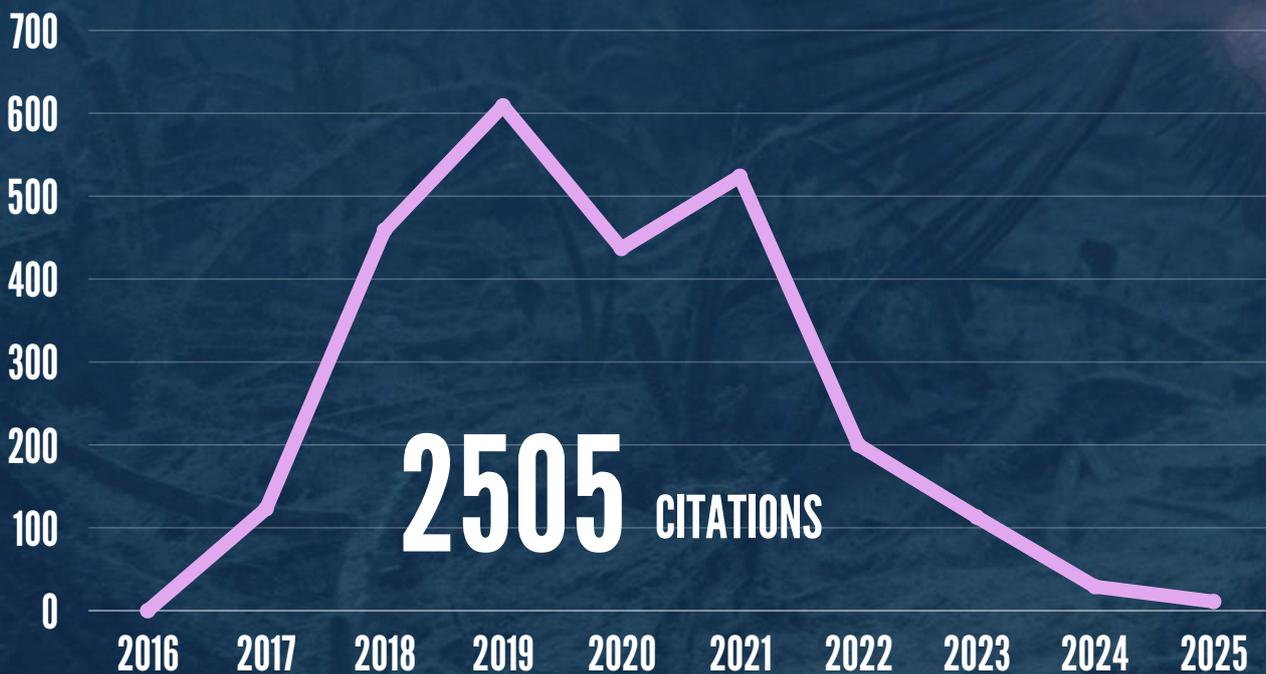
96 PUBLICATIONS IN PEER-REVIEWED JOURNALS

403 CO-AUTHORS

NUMBER OF PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS PER YEAR



NUMBER OF CITATIONS PER YEAR



WHERE OUR CO-AUTHORS CAME FROM: A 10-YEAR OVERVIEW BY CONTINENT



TOP CITED PUBLICATIONS

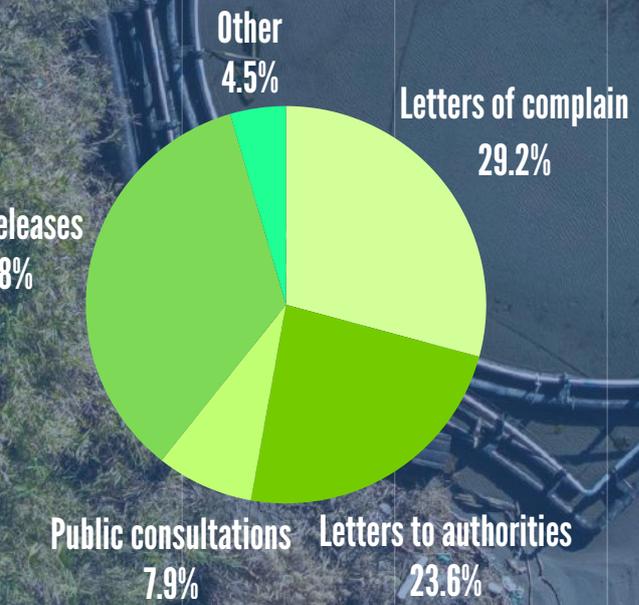
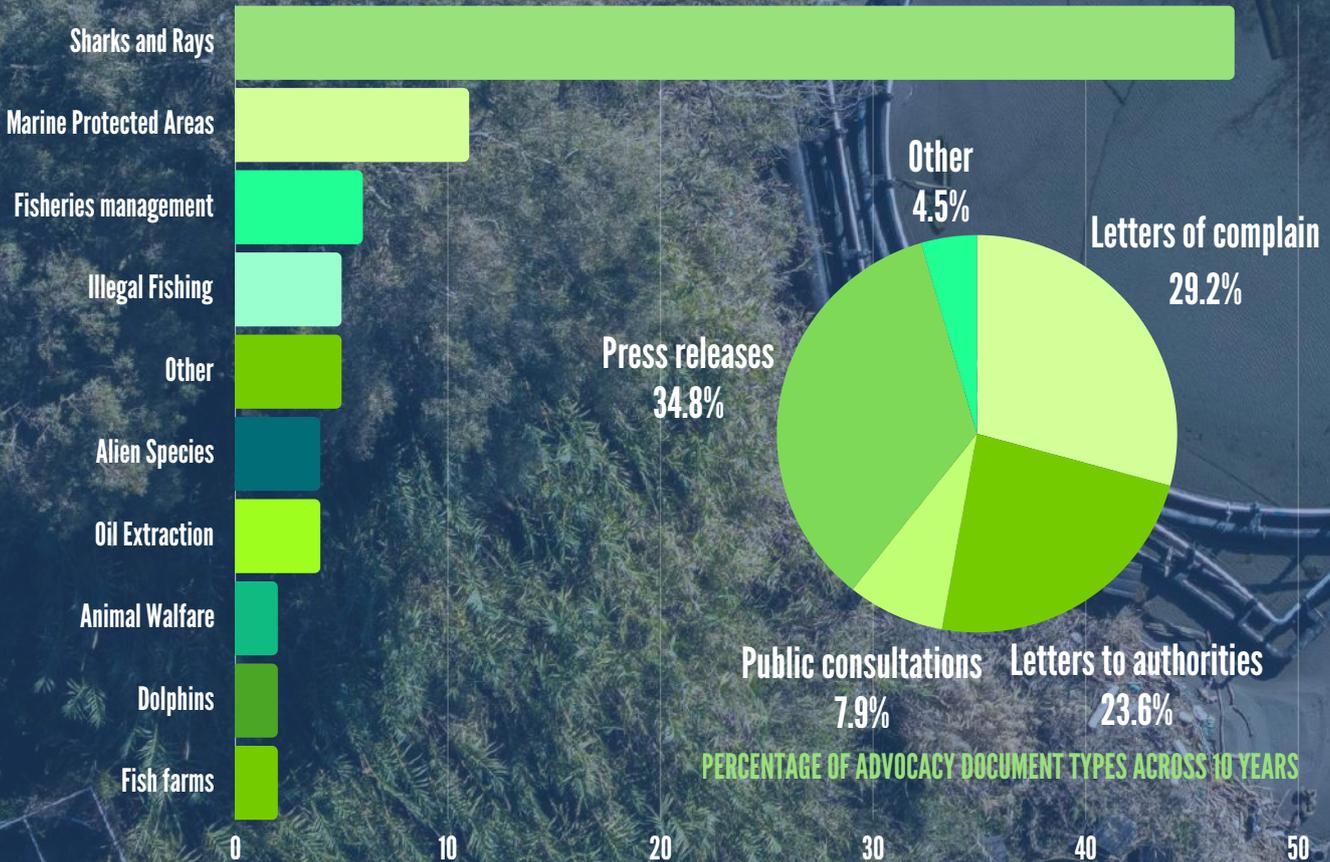
- Givos I., Kleitou P., Poursanidis D., Batjakas I., Bernardi G., Crocetta F., Doumpas N., Kalogirou S., Kampouris TE, Keramidas I., Langeneck J., Maximiadi M., Mitsou E., Stoilas V.-O., Tiralongo F., Romanidis-Kyriakidis G., Xentidis NJ., Zenetos A., Katsanevakis S., 2019. The importance of citizen-science in monitoring marine invasions and stimulating public engagement – A case project from the Eastern Mediterranean. *Biological Invasions*. 21(12): 3707–3721
- Givos, I., Keramidas, I., Deidun, A., Font, T., Kleitou, P., Lloret, J., Matić-Skoko, S., Said, A., Tiralongo, F., Moutopoulos, D.K. (2018). Identifying Recreational fisheries in the Mediterranean through Social Media. *Fisheries Management and Ecology*, 25(4): 287-295.
- Charitou, A., Aga-Spyridopoulou, R.N., Mylona, Z., Beck, R., McLellan, F. and Addamo, A.M. (2021). Investigating the knowledge and attitude of the Greek public towards marine plastic pollution and the EU Single-Use Plastics Directive. *Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 166, p.112182.

ADVOCACY

NUMBER OF ADVOCACY DOCUMENTS PRODUCED PER YEAR



NUMBER OF ADVOCACY DOCUMENTS PER TOPIC IN THE 10 YEARS



PERCENTAGE OF ADVOCACY DOCUMENT TYPES ACROSS 10 YEARS

83 ENTITIES HAVE
CO-SIGNED OUR
POSITION PAPERS

13 AUTHORITIES HAVE
RECEIVED LETTERS OF
COMPLAIN

5 MINISTRIES HAVE
RECEIVED LETTERS

Despite being a new member in iSea, it did not take me long to realise the importance and the authenticity of its work. iSea consists of individuals from various fields and different scientific backgrounds, forming a multi-faced force that, through collaboration and a shared vision, works toward a higher cause, the conservation of aquatic ecosystems.

At the advocacy level, we will continue to push for the effective implementation of national and European environmental legislation.

We will persist in calling for institutional reforms aimed at the meaningful protection of marine species and habitats.

From the restoration of aquatic ecosystems, to the establishment of strict protection measures for the marine environment and the species that inhabit them, we will continue to work holistically, collaboratively, and interdisciplinarily toward our common goal.

**NEFELI
KONIDARI**

**POLICY
OFFICER**

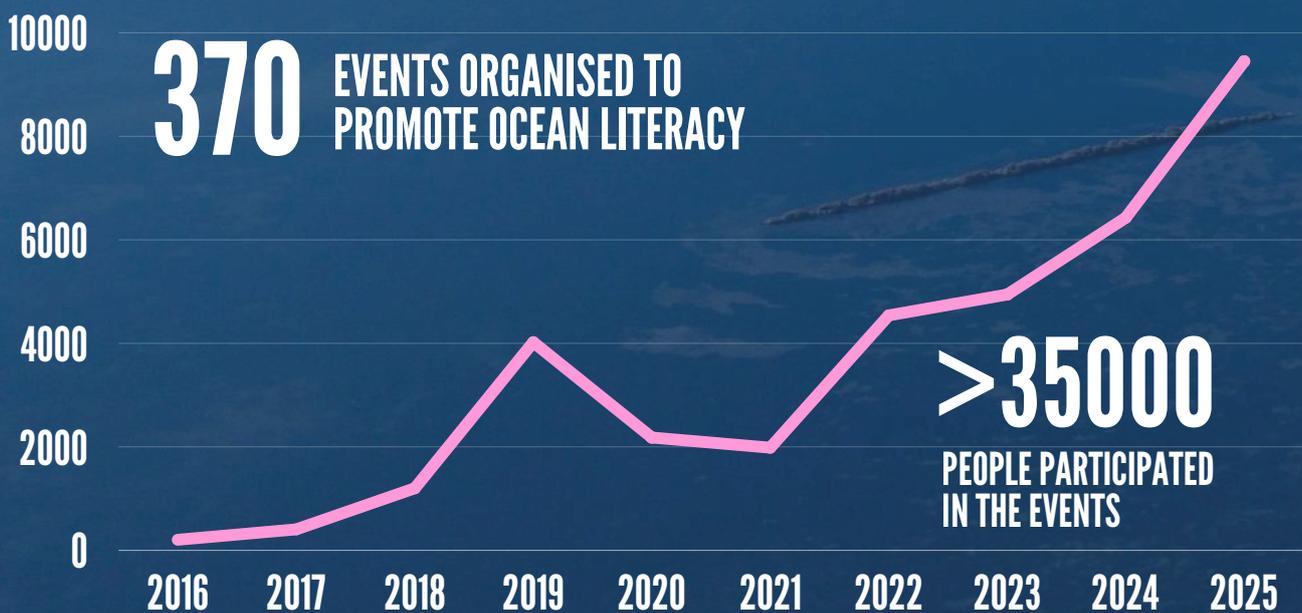


AWARENESS RAISING

NUMBER OF AWARENESS RAISING EVENTS PER YEAR



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN OUR AWARENESS RAISING EVENTS PER YEAR



I first met iSea team as a volunteer being informed on marine litter pollution from plastics and microplastics in the Greek seas and participating in relevant actions.

Now, representing iSea and promoting Ocean literacy by informing the public and the students, and mobilising local communities, I am very happy to experience the enthusiasm of people participating in our activities, and especially the next generation!

Building on our existing collaboration with educators, we will continue enhancing their work to achieve active citizenship and environmentally-conscious citizens.

We still have many innovative ideas to implement, inspired by the people we collaborate with, their stories and the environmental issues that emerge on our planet.

**IOANNA
TZIOGA**

**COMMUNICATION
ASSISTANT**

21422

**PEOPLE HAVE BEEN
INFORMED ABOUT
MARINE LITTER
PLASTIC POLLUTION**

5100

**SCHOOL STUDENTS
INVOLVED IN OCEAN
LITERACY ACTIONS**

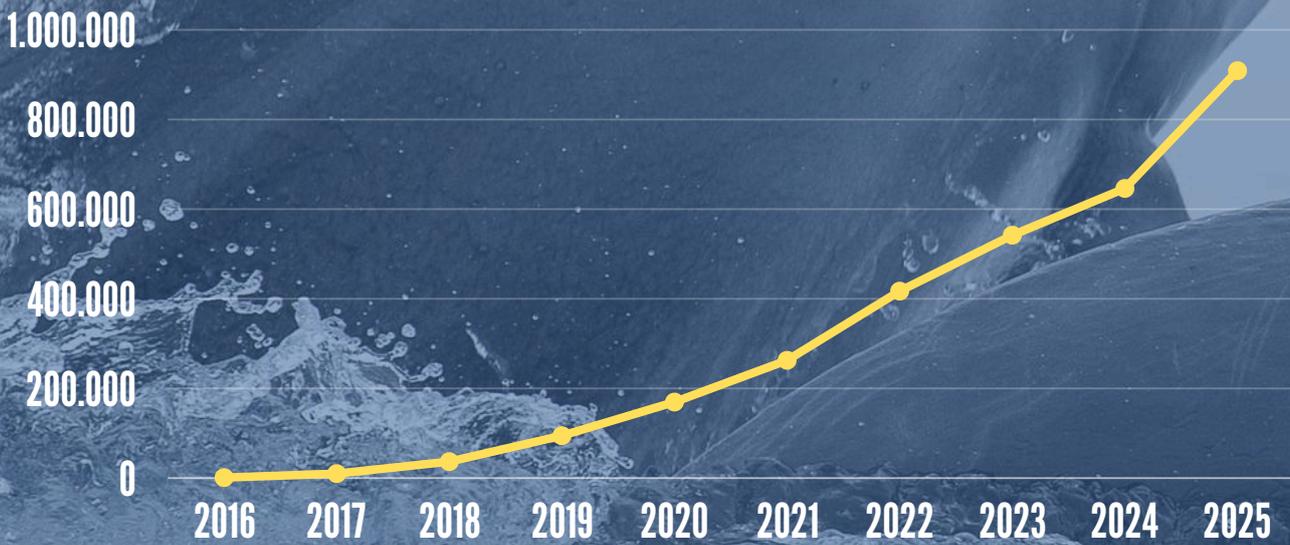
937

**FISHERS WERE
TRAINED**

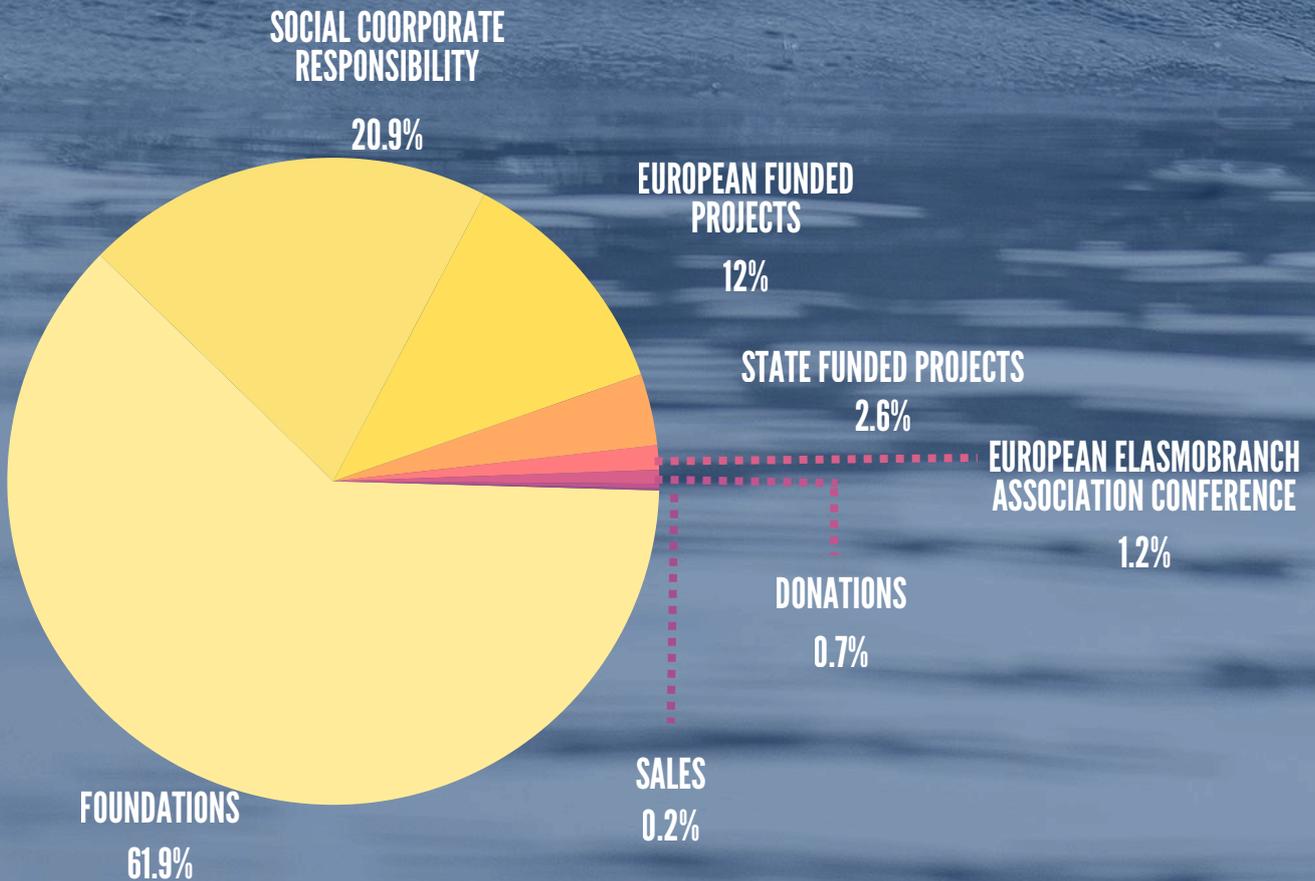


FINANCIAL GROWTH

TURNOVER PER YEAR



FUNDING SOURCES



148 PROJECTS
IMPLEMENTED

148 REPORTS
SUBMITTED

83% SUCCESS RATE ON
PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS

Numbers don't lie! Over the past decade, iSea's financial growth reflects a job well done and a steady strengthening of the organisation's operational capacity.

These results are not only a measure of financial performance, but a reflection of the collective commitment that has driven iSea forward over the last ten years. I joined iSea midway through this journey, and during this period we have focused not only on sustaining growth, but also on recognising and addressing the need to further diversify our funding streams. This celebration serves as fuel to continue our conservation efforts and to work toward many more achievements in the years to come.

**THOMAS
CHOULIARAS**
FINANCIAL
OFFICER





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