



Corfu, 18 July 2023

Protecting the underwater beauty of Erimitis, NE Corfu

Blue Marine Foundation, Ionian Environment Foundation and iSea join forces once again in the **Ionian**, to document and highlight the **ecological importance** of the marine environment of Erimitis starting this week with a visit to NE Corfu for undertaking discussions and conducting research in the area.

The Erimitis Peninsula lies in the Straits of **Corfu** and constitutes a landscape of unique **natural beauty**. It is an untouched area in the Northeast of Corfu Island, accessible only through hiking trails or by boat. This remote area includes seven **bays** and three coastal freshwater **lakes**, almost touching the sea. At this pristine natural treasure, flora and fauna thrive, from magnificent flowers to forest species, and wild mammals.

However, the marine part of this paradise on earth is relatively underexplored compared to its terrestrial environment. Thus, iSea since **2021** is studying the marine biodiversity of the area with a focus on one of the most important habitats in the Mediterranean, **P. oceanica** meadows and the **biodiversity** they host.

According to the [latest results](#), the area composes a **healthy and rich** marine ecosystem. This fact, in combination with the amount of **Blue Carbon** assessed to be stored in the area's *P. oceanica* meadows, makes the protection and science based management of the area critical, in order to avoid its degradation from existing and upcoming **threats and disturbances**.

The initiative of the three organisations aims at increasing the **scientific knowledge** on priority marine habitats and protected and threatened species. They aim to highlight the significance of the Erimitis marine area and inform decision makers for delineating science-based management.

Specific actions will include:

- **Mapping** the habitat of Posidonia meadows in new study areas encircling the Erimitis peninsula from St. Stefano to Avlaki Beach
- **Evaluating** the conservation status of the Posidonia meadows within and outside the area to inform policy and decision makers for the effective management of the habitat
- **Identifying** other habitats and species that are under threat and/or protection status to guide future research and conservation initiatives
- Forming a **report** that encompasses all the existing knowledge for the marine part of Erimitis.

Information to the editor:

Blue Marine Foundation: Blue Marine Foundation is a UK based charity dedicated to restoring the ocean to health by tackling overfishing, one of the world's biggest environmental problems. This dynamic charity is working all over the world to protect huge areas of ocean and restore marine biodiversity. In the coming decade, Blue Marine aims to see at least 30 percent of the ocean protected, and the other 70 per cent sustainably managed.

For more information, contact:

Angela Lazou Dean

Greece Projects Manager, Blue Marine Foundation

T. (+30) 6947778113

Email: angela@bluemarinefoundation.com



Ionian Environment Foundation: The essence of the IEF's approach is to provide support and guidance for conservation projects that the local communities themselves have initiated and designed. We have seen in our first three years that tangible local action can unlock solutions to shared global challenges, and that this is best achieved by empowering communities to protect their own local environment through a 'bottom-up' approach.

For more information, contact:

Victoria Turner

Executive Director, Ionian Environment Foundation

T. (+44) 7896241146

Email: victoria@ionianenvironment.org

iSea: iSea is a Not-for-Profit Non-Governmental organisation founded in March 2016, in Greece, with the aim to preserve, protect and restore the precious heritage of the aquatic environment. The organisation consists of a team of young, yet experienced scientists and professionals of various disciplines, from marine biologists to specialists in environmental management and educators. The organisation strives to shed light on the foremost issues affecting our oceans and propose alternatives for a sustainable future. Its activities focus on 4 main pillars: Vulnerable species, Citizen Science, Human and Aquatic Ecosystems, and Aquatic litter. The tools utilised by iSea vary from scientific research to citizen science and environmental education and awareness.

For more information, contact:

Roxani Naasan Aga - Spyridopoulou

Project manager, iSea

T. (+30) 2313090696

Email: roxani.naasanaga@isea.com.gr