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Press Release Unveiling the Ecological Importance of Erimitis Marine Area

Erimitis Peninsula, located in northeastern of **Corfu island**, is a pristine ecosystem of unparalleled beauty and the island's last unexploited paradise. Thus, in recent years, it has become the focal point of the local community's efforts to preserve its unique natural beauty and environmental value.

Until 2021, however, its **marine area** remained largely unexplored. To highlight its ecological significance, the [environmental organisation iSea](#) and the [Blue Marine Foundation](#) have been working in the area, studying its marine biodiversity with a special focus on one of the most important habitats of the Mediterranean—**Posidonia oceanica meadows** and the rich **biodiversity** they support.

Through this underwater exploration, the inventory of knowledge "**The Ecological Importance of Erimitis Marine Area**" has been published and continuously updated. The inventory documents the species and habitats recorded in the area, showcases the importance of this marine ecosystem, and highlights the threats it faces.

In Erimitis **5 different habitat types** are identified, including Posidonia meadows, which support **38 different fish fauna species** during their early life stages, which move to the surrounding rocky habitats as they mature. Additionally, these meadows store an impressive **3,384 tons of Blue Carbon** (tC).

Posidonia meadows play a crucial role as **climate regulators**, as they are even more efficient at carbon sequestration than terrestrial forests. In Erimitis, 62.1 hectares of Posidonia meadows were recorded, with their conservation status assessed as "Good" to "High". However, in the bays of **Agios Stefanos and Avlaki**, their ecological status was assessed as "Moderate", due to coastal development, while in the port of Agios Stefanos, the effects of pollution on the meadows were evident. Moreover, the impact of anchoring was most apparent in the **Aria Bay**, where the highest number of boats is recorded during summer. There, the percentage of dead matte (matte morte) exceeded 20% of the meadow's area, with clear signs of recent anchoring and uprooted rhizomes.

Despite these severe pressures, the area's underwater landscape continues to captivate visitors, hosting **211 marine species in total**—186 fauna and 25 flora species. Among them are stunning Mediterranean slipper lobster, discreet Date shells, and playful Mediterranean monk seals. Of these species, 19 are **protected**, while 6 are **threatened with extinction**.



However, this natural value has not been unaffected by the spread of **invasive alien species**. Since 2023, 8 new alien species have been recorded in the area, that had not been documented in previous years.

Find the updated version of the inventory of knowledge here: <https://isea.com.gr/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/2024-ENG-Erimitis-Inventory-of-Knowledge-2.pdf>

The inventory "**The Ecological Value of Erimitis Marine Area**" offers a unique opportunity to explore the region and discover its natural treasures. More importantly, it emphasizes the need to protect Corfu's hidden gem.

On **Sunday, 23 February, 10.30-12.30, at Sinies Cultural Association**, the environmental organisation iSea, Erimitis Plus Association and Blue Marine Foundation will share even more insights about the area and the findings of the **researches**, but also about our next steps and future actions with the aim to effectively use the scientific data collected to safeguard this unique marine treasure!

For more information:

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