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## **Press Releases**

### **For the 6th consecutive year, fishers are "Fishing for Litter."**

With the pilot participation of 8 fishing vessels, an ambitious project was launched in 2018. After **6 years** it has grown to include **¼ of the country's fishing trawler fleet**, becoming the primary source of valuable data on **benthic litter** in our country. Moreover, it serves as an ongoing process of informing and engaging fishers in addressing **marine litter pollution**.

The "[Fishing for Litter](#)" project, an initiative of the [Athanasios C. Laskaridis Charitable Foundation](#), implemented in collaboration with the environmental organisation [iSea](#), has successfully removed **186 tons of benthic litter** from our seas over the last 6 years. Notably, 83% of this waste is **plastic**, with plastic bags, purse seine ropes and plastic bottles being the most abundant. In addition, the fishers participating in the project, acting as **Citizen Scientists**, recorded more than **311,000** objects, of which **118,469** exclusively belong to Abandoned, Lost and/or Discarded Fishing Gear.

In **2024**, **48 fishers** from ports across the **Aegean Sea** once again took the lead in this effort, successfully removing over **60 tons** of litter from deep depths. Of this, 81% consisted of **plastic** items, while 61% of the total waste removed were **Single-Use Plastics** and more than 23% belonged to **Abandoned, Lost and/or Discarded Fishing Gear** which was recorded and removed.

The contribution of fishers is now more crucial than ever in monitoring and addressing marine litter pollution, as Greece complies with the **European Directive 2019/904** on **Single-Use Plastics** and **plastic fishing gear** setting targets and measures to **reduce their impact**.

We thank all fishers who, by participating in the "Fishing for Litter" project, are leading the way in raising awareness within their industry, reducing marine litter and collecting valuable data on marine litter pollution in our country.



#### **About the project:**

The **"Fishing for Litter"** project promotes the participation of the fishing industry in the reduction and monitoring of benthic marine litter based on the [OSPAR Agreement 2017-018 protocol](#).

Participating professional fishers collect the passively fished marine litter and record it based on a protocol adapted for this purpose. This waste is then delivered to the available port facilities.

The main objectives of the project are to raise awareness within the fishing industry and change their waste management practices, remove marine litter from deep depths, and collect valuable data on benthic litter abundance and possible sources.

Find more about the project here: <https://isea.com.gr/fishing-for-litter-project/?lang=en>