

PROSFERO

PROSFERO CAMPAIGN
IN SARONIKOS GULF

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Prosfero campaign is funded by Procter & Gamble and AB Vasilopoulos and implemented by iSea with the aim to achieve cleaner beaches and coasts. Since 2018, 294 beach and underwater cleanups have been conducted throughout Greece in the context of the project and more than 93.5 tons of litter have been removed.

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iSea

Images:

iSea

The present interim report refers to the activities conducted in the context of the 22nd wave of Prosfero.

UNTIL TODAY

294 beach
& underwater cleanups

93 tons of litter
have been removed



BEACH CLEANUPS

1st Activity (A1): Vagia beach, Aegina island*

2nd Activity (A2): Skala beach, Agkistri island

3rd Activity (A3): Megalochori beach, Agkistri island

ACTIVITY CODE	DATE	VOLUNTEERS	LITTER COLLECTED (KG)
A1*	11-03-2024	6	62.8
A2	14-03-2024	33	23.1
A3	15-03-2024	4	29.7
Total		43	115.6

Table 1: Supplementary data of “Prosfero” beach cleanups conducted in March 2025.

*Vagia Beach: On this particular beach, we initially recorded data at the originally proposed site. However, a local volunteer recommended going to the other side of the beach, which was much more polluted. While our analysis is based on data from the first site, the recorded weight of the collected litter comes from the second, more polluted area.

BEACH LITTER MONITORING RESULTS

In the context of the actions and to survey the abundance of marine litter in each area, beach litter was monitored according to the monitoring framework and list of items of the protocol established in the context of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

In total 115.6 kg of litter were removed from the 3 beaches in Aegina and Agkistri island. A total of 1,236 litter items were recorded, 95% of which were plastics. Consistent with global literature and data, plastic was the most abundant type of litter across all actions conducted.

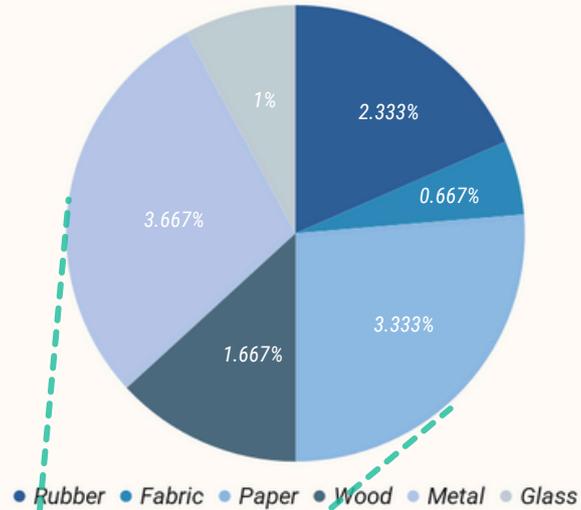


LITTER TYPES

The average percentage of plastic found on all beaches is 97%.
In all the cleanup actions, plastic was the most abundant type of litter.

Beach Cleanup Aegina - Agistri (11/03/2025 to 15/03/2025) excluding plastic item

Figure 1: Litter typer, excluding plastic item, expressed as a percentage (%).



Beach Cleanup Aegina - Agistri (11/03/2025 to 15/03/2025)

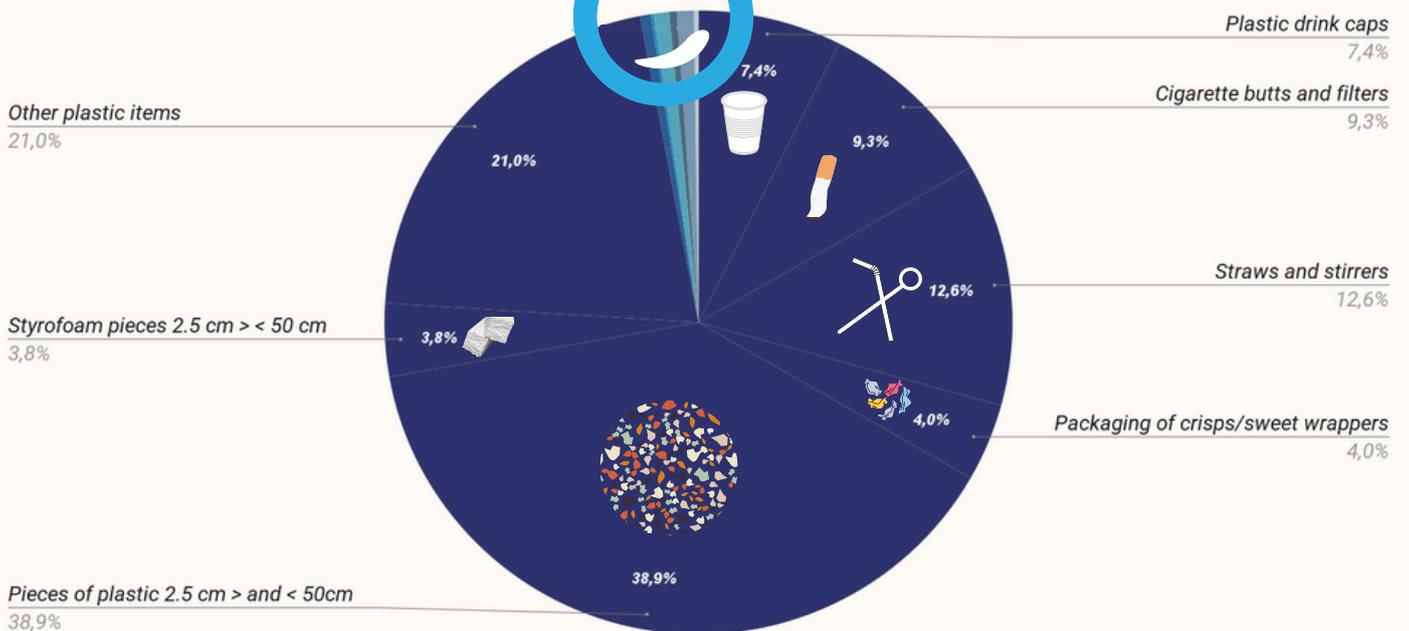


Figure 2: Types of litter, expressed as a percentage (%).

In all of beach cleanups, plastic exceeded 95%.

LITTER TYPES

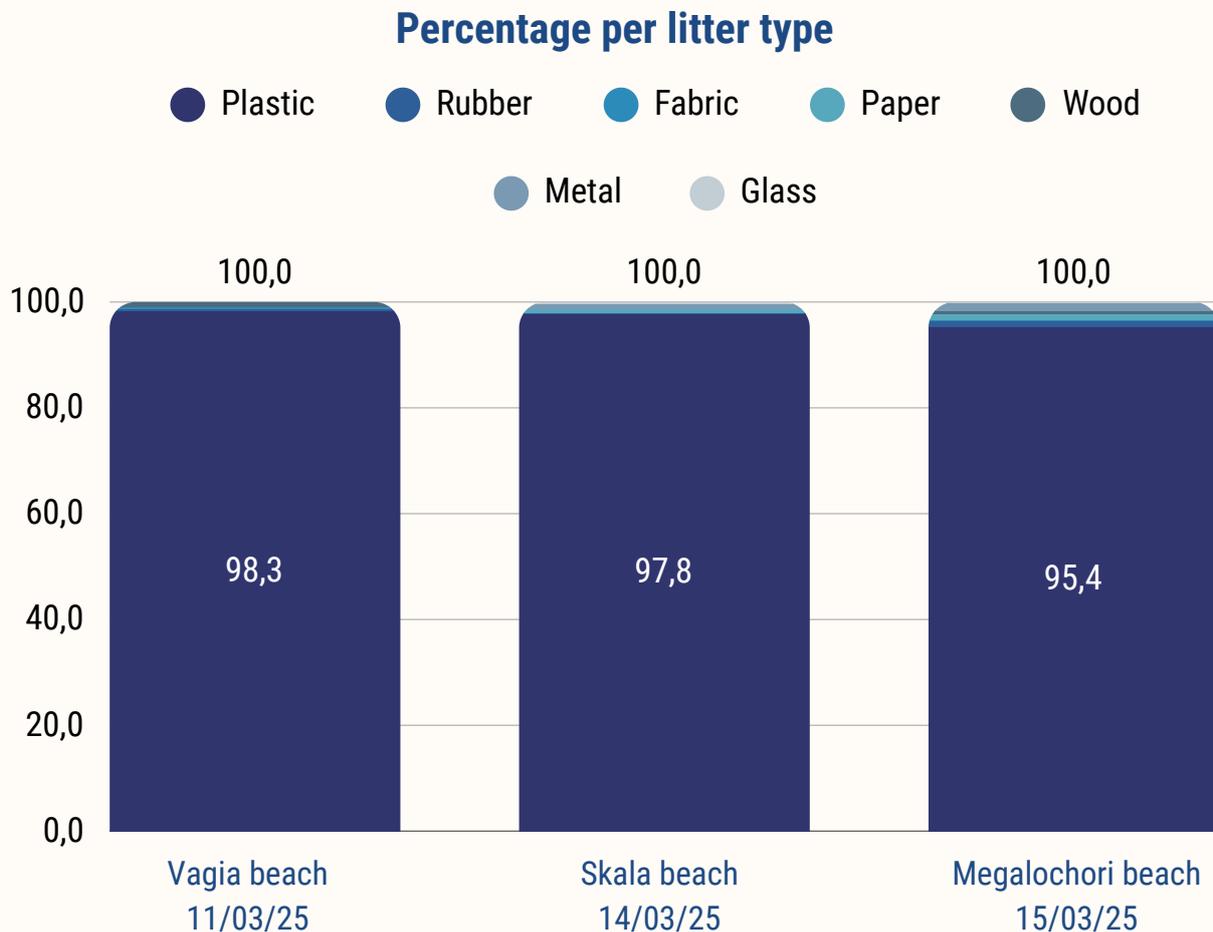


Figure 3: Collected types of litter per beach cleanup, expressed as a percentage (%).

Saronikos Gulf is recognized as one of the most polluted areas in the Mediterranean (Spedicato et al., 2019). The presence of the biggest port (Piraeus) and city (Athens) in Greece probably affects the amount of litter that ends up in the gulf. In the gulf, there are more than 12 islands and islets that due to easy accessibility and proximity to some of the biggest cities in Greece, are some of the most famous tourist destinations during the whole year.

On Aegina Island, in Vagia Beach (A1) we implemented the monitoring of the amount of litter on the proposed beach, on which we counted 235 items in 60 meters. The 98% was plastic and the most abundant litter was pieces of “plastic >2.5 and <50cm”. On Agistri Island, in Skala Beach (A2) we counted 494 items in 100 meters, 97% of them were plastic and the most abundant item was again “pieces of plastic >2.5 and <50cm”. Finally, in Megalochori Beach (A3) we counted 507 items in 100 meters, 95% of them were plastic and the most abundant item was again “pieces of plastic >2.5 and <50cm”.

LITTER TYPES

ITEMS	PERCENTAGE (%)
Plastic pieces 2.5 cm > <50 cm	41%
Plastic straws and stirrers	13%
Cigarette butts and filters	10%
Plastic drinking cups	8%
Packaging of crisps and wrappers	4%

Table 2: Five most abundant beach litter items, expressed as a percentage %.



LITTER OF LOCAL INTEREST



There was a big amount of plastic straws in both islands despite that they are banned by EU legislation.

A litter that we have found many times in both islands but first time encountered was a plastic equipment possibly for water tanks or from aquacultures.



We visited both islands a few days after carnival festivities. We found a lot of paper streamers and confetti both in beach and underwater cleanups.

RECOMMENDATIONS



In accordance with the enforcement of the European Directive (EU) 2019/90412 and the National Law 4736/202013 Single-Use Plastic straws should be banned. However, they are illegally provided to customers, or they are mislabeled as reusable. Stricter controls on businesses should be enforced to track the illegal supply of Single-Use Plastic straws.



Raise awareness among the citizens by providing sustainable and compostable items during festive seasons while avoiding single-use plastic items and items containing microplastics such as glitter.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Cigarette butts were the 3rd most abundant item on the beaches of Aegina and Agistri. To avoid their disposal in the environment ashtrays should be placed in all public spaces in urban and remote areas, where recreational activities take place, like beaches and parks. Fines foreseen by each Municipality Cleaning Regulation should be enforced, especially in cases of non-proper disposal of cigarette butts and filters, or other small litter items.



Litter of local origin, such as this component used possibly in water facilities or aquacultures, must be investigated locally to understand its pathways of introduction to the environment. This can be easily solved by asking locals if they know their uses and then taking measures so that items like this don't end up in the environment.

UNDERWATER CLEANUPS

4th Activity (A4): Aegina port, Aegina island

5th Activity (A5): Megalochori port, Agkistri island

ACTIVITY CODE	DATE	VOLUNTEERS
A4	10-03-2024	13
A5	13-03-2024	7
Total		28

Table 3: Supplementary data of "Prospero" underwater cleanups conducted in March 2025.



UNDERWATER LITTER MONITORING RESULTS

In the context of the actions and to survey the abundance of marine litter in each area, beach litter was monitored according to the framework and item list outlined in the Marine Strategy Framework Directive protocol.

In total 660 kg of litter were removed from the 2 ports in Aegina and Agkistri island. A total of 1,546 litter items were recorded, 57% of which were plastics. In consistence with the global literature and data, plastic was the most abundant type of litter in all the actions conducted.

LITTER TYPES

The average percentage of plastic found on the two ports is 57%.
In both cleanup actions, plastic, and particularly, plastic bottles, was the most abundant type of litter.

Underwater Cleanup Aegina - Agistri (10/03/2025 - 13/03/2025)

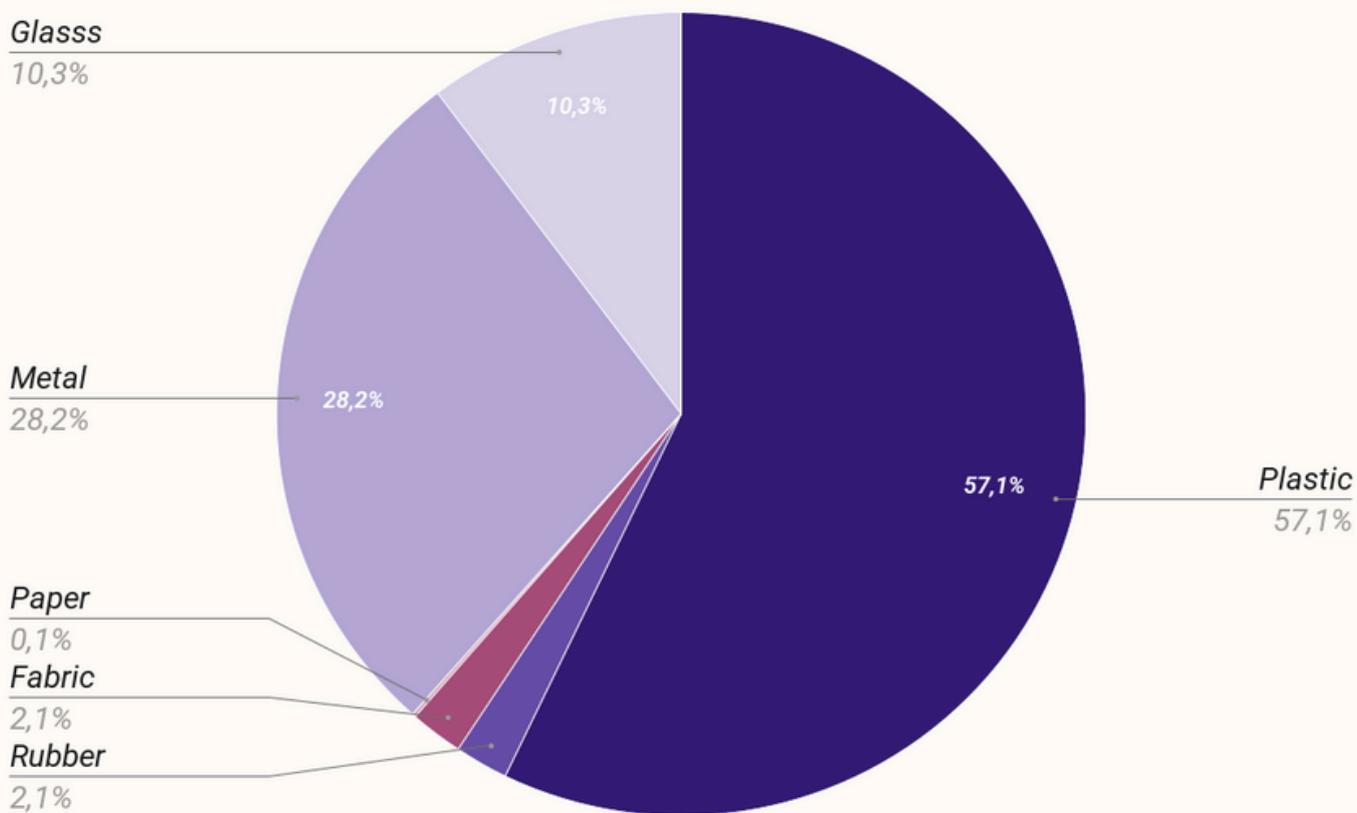


Figure 4: Collected types of litter per underwater cleanup, expressed as a percentage (%).

In both ports plastic exceeded 57%, followed by metal reaching 28.2%.

LITTER TYPES

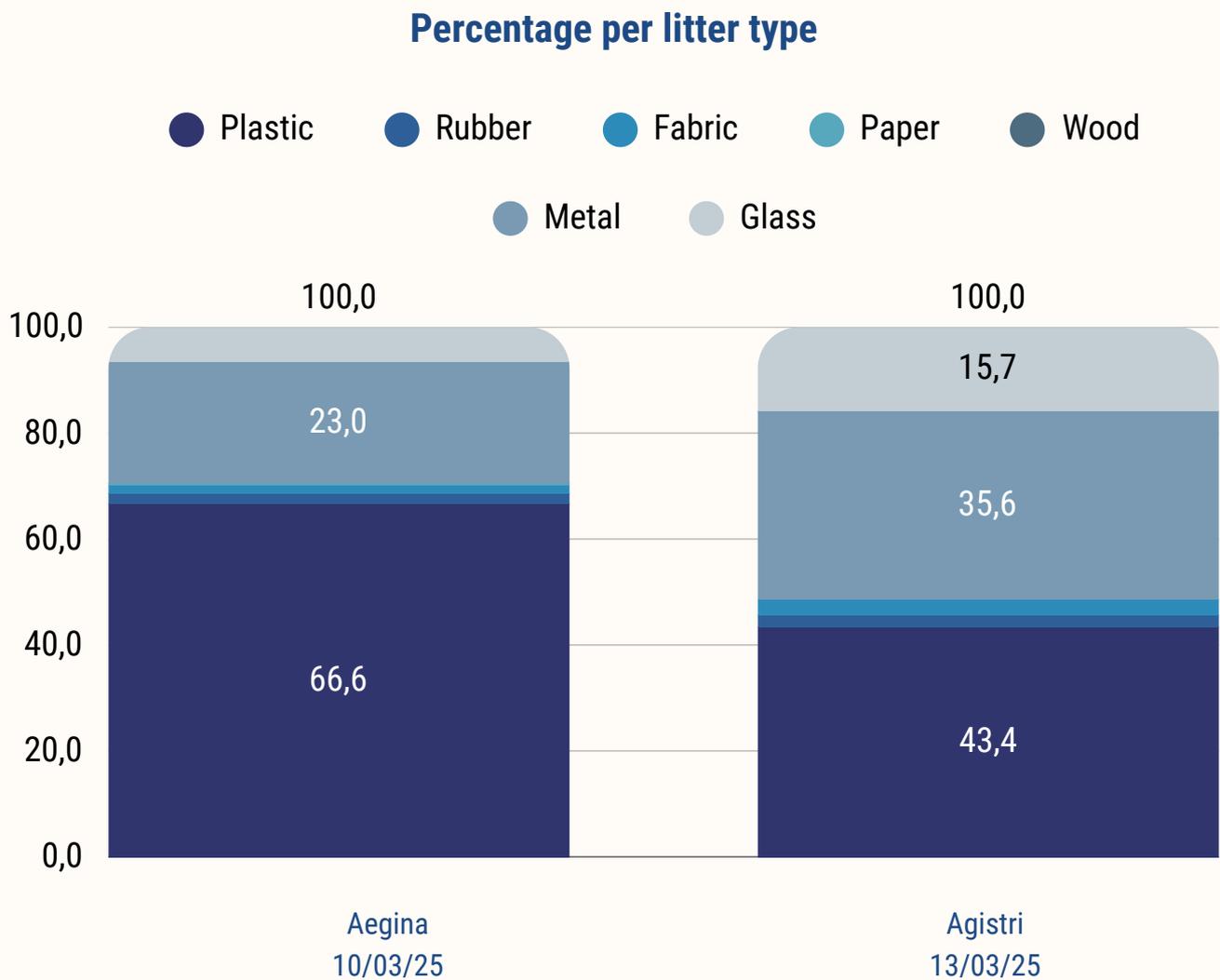


Figure 5: Collected types of litter per underwater cleanup, expressed as a percentage (%).

At Aegina port (A4), the most abundant litter items recorded were plastic bottles (356) and aluminum beverage cans (187) followed by plastic cups (137). These results align with the results of all our previous underwater cleanups.

At Agistri port (A5), the most abundant litter items removed were aluminum beverage cans (190) followed by plastic bottles (162) and glass bottles (64).

Both ports are used by fishers, sea taxis, and ferries. Due to this activity, we have found a lot of items related to tourism, such as sun hats, diving masks, clothing like diving suits, and cloth pegs, probably originating from sailing boats.

LITTER TYPES

ITEMS	PERCENTAGE (%)
Plastic bottles	35%
Beverages and beer cans	26%
Plastic cups	11%
Glass bottles	8%
Tires	2%
Plastic construction items	2%
Kitchenware items	2%

Table 4: Five most abundant underwater litter items, expressed as a percentage %.

In total, we removed 518 plastic bottles, 377 beverage and beer cans, and 159 single-use plastic cups. The number of kitchenware items was increased following the 2nd cleanup in Agistri, where the port is probably used by sailors who lose some of their kitchen items - or discard them illegally at the port.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Plastic bottles are among the top litter items found both on the beach and underwater. The number of available bins must be increased, especially in areas with many visitors, such as the two ports of Aegina and Agistri. The bins should be correctly maintained, ensuring that their lids are in good condition and can be properly closed. Additionally, bins should be properly secured during extreme weather events.

Plastic bottles and cups are made of PET, a high-value recyclable plastic. Thus, PET items should be discarded separately by the consumers supported by the installation of dedicated recycling stations. Similarly, aluminum beverage cans and glass bottles should be collected separately for recycling, as they are both valuable recyclable materials.



Old tires are commonly used as bumpers on the edge of the docks and usually end up in the water after a while. This practice is not environmentally sustainable because the submerged tires can be harmful to marine organisms. This method does not follow the standard guidelines for port fenders and is not considered safe for the boats and the dock. Certified bumpers should be placed on the docks.

PARTICIPATION

A total of more than 63 people participated in the actions implemented in Aegina and Agkistri islands.

Specifically, 55 volunteers and 8 divers contributed to the activities and the removal of litter from beaches and ports. Volunteers and divers included iSea members, as well as local high schools, associations, and the diving center Aegina Divers.



13 participants

Aegina Divers

Local associations



6 participants

Aegina Divers



7 participants

Aegina Divers



30 participants

Highschool of Skala, Agkistri



4 participants

iSea members

INFORMATIVE EVENTS

As part of the “Prosfero” project 1 informative event took place on Aegina island under the auspices of the Municipality of Aegina.

18 people attended the event including locals, journalists, and tourists. The iSea representatives informed all the attendees about the aim and the actions of “Prosfero” project and distributed informative material on marine pollution and measures for its prevention and mitigation.



Adults and children who attended the event had the opportunity to learn about the most common beach litter and to see items removed from the seabed during underwater cleanups as well. Children played with the floor game and answered questions about how they could change their everyday habits into zero waste and zero plastic. The event was implemented with the collaboration and under the auspices of the Municipality of Aegina and with the participation of iSea’s volunteers.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

A total of 5 “stories” were published via Social Media by iSea during the actions and 4 by local stakeholders, to inform the public about the progress of each action, maintain interest in the project, and raise awareness about the issue of marine litter and its impact on marine ecosystems.

STORY	REACH
iSea 1	841
iSea 2	744
iSea 3	717
iSea 4	423
iSea 5	310
Local Stakeholder 1	349
Local Stakeholder 2	296
Local Stakeholder 3	263
Local Stakeholder 4	479
Total	4.422

A press release was created and shared with the local press and uploaded on iSea’s website, inviting the local communities to participate in the campaign and providing information about the schedule of the upcoming actions.

MEDIA	LINK
Aegina portal	Link 1
Aegina portal	Link 2
Aegina portal	Link 3

Table 5: Press releases about the Prosero project published regarding actions in Aegina and Agkistri islands.

Interesting fact: This is the same beach depicted in the image on page 6.

Find out more about
Prosero project



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for the Preservation of the
Aquatic Ecosystems

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