

Prosfero

Beach and underwater cleanups in Epirus



Prosfero

The Proseforo program is a joint effort by Procter & Gamble and AB Vassilopoulos, implemented by iSea with the aim of reducing waste and restoring Greece's coastlines and seabeds. Since 2018, 308 beach and underwater cleanups have been carried out throughout Greece as part of the program, removing more than 94.8 tons of waste.

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This interim report concerns actions implemented as part of the 22nd wave of Prosfero.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Pacific Ocean diving center in Preveza, the 6th Primary School of Preveza, the 1st Model Gymnasium of Preveza, the 2nd Gymnasium of Preveza, the 1st EPAL of Preveza, the Plataria Kindergarten, the Mesopotamos Primary School, the Achelous Valley and Amvrakikos Gulf Protected Areas Management Unit, the Epirus Protected Areas Management Unit, as well as the Municipality of Preveza, the Municipality of Parga, the Municipality of Igoumenitsa, the Port Authority of Preveza, the Port Authority of Parga, the Port Authority of Sivota, the Port Authority of Igoumenitsa, the Municipal Port Fund of Preveza, RADIO PREVEZA 93.0 FM, and Municipal Radio Preveza 89.7 FM for their cooperation and communication of the actions.



Until today

308 beach
& underwater cleaning

94.8 tons of waste have been
removed

Beach cleanups

Action 1 (A1): Paliosaraga Beach - Preveza

Action 2 (A2): Ammoudia Beach

Action 3 (A3): Drepano Beach - Kalamas Delta - Action of Ecological Significance

Action 4 (A4): Plataria Beach (cancelled due to weather conditions)

Table 1: Supplementary data on beach cleanups within the framework of "Prosfero", Epirus 2025.

ACTION	DATE	VOLUNTEERS	KILOS OF WASTE
A1	07-04-2025	77	50,3
A2	11-04-2025	54	104.4
A3	12-04-2025	7	27.8
Total		138	182.5



Beach Waste Recording Results

As part of the actions and in order to study the abundance of aquatic litter in the area, the aquatic waste on the beaches we visited was recorded and counted in accordance with the protocol established by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

A total of 182.5 kg of waste was removed from three beaches in Epirus, while 267 items of waste were counted and recorded, 90% of which were plastic. In line with global literature and existing data, plastic was the most abundant type of waste recorded in all beach cleanup actions carried out in Epirus.

Waste Categories

The total percentage of plastic recorded on all beaches was close to 94%. In all beach cleanup actions, plastic was the most abundant of all waste categories.

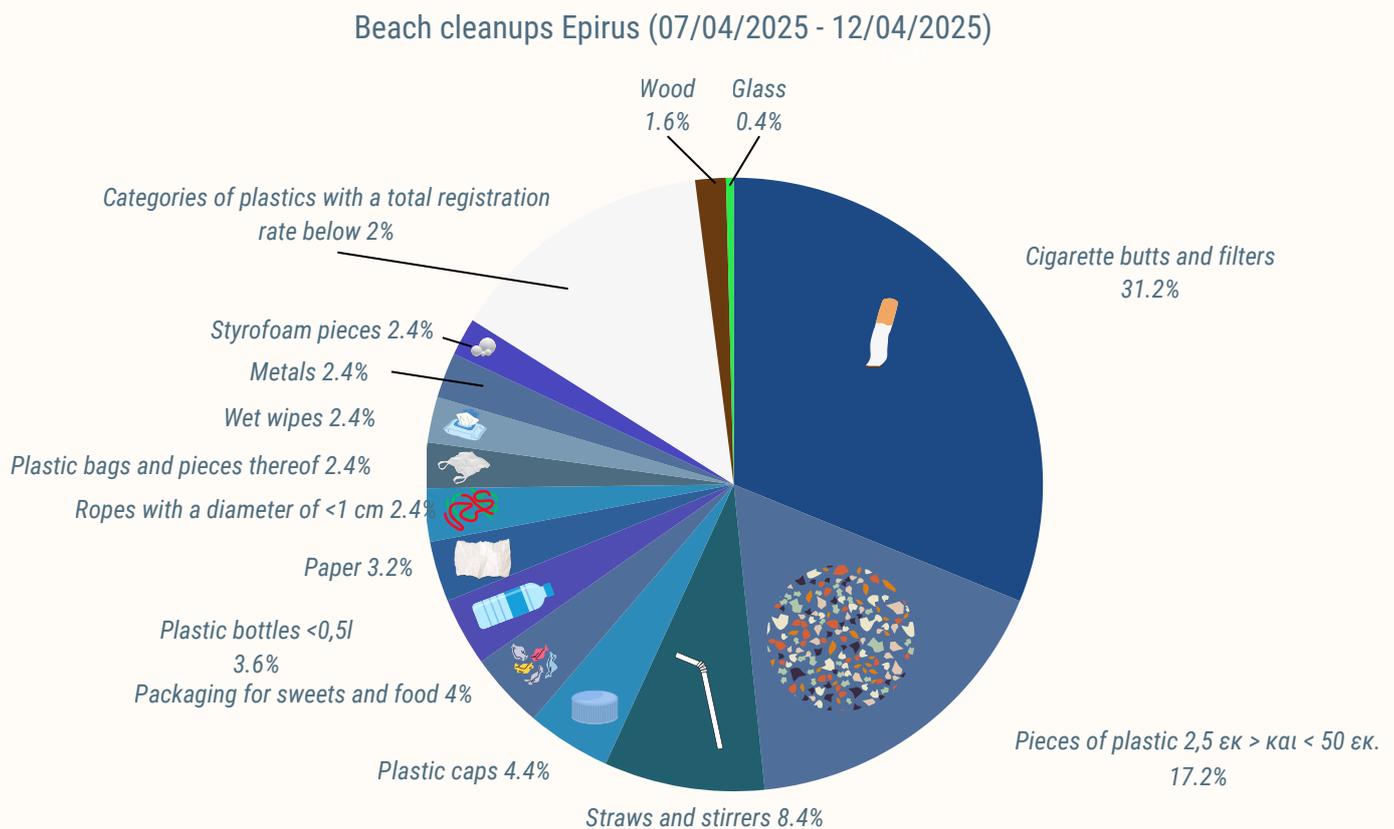


Figure 1: Waste categories as a percentage (%) of beach cleanups in Epirus.

In all coastal cleanups, plastic items exceeded 71%, specifically 71% at Ammoudia beach, 95.6% at Paliosaraga beach in Preveza, and 94.1% at Drepano beach - Kalamas Delta.

The most common item recorded was "Cigarette butts and filters" with a total of 78 items, followed by "Pieces of plastic 2.5 > and <50 cm" with a total of 43 items.

Waste categories

Percentages per waste category

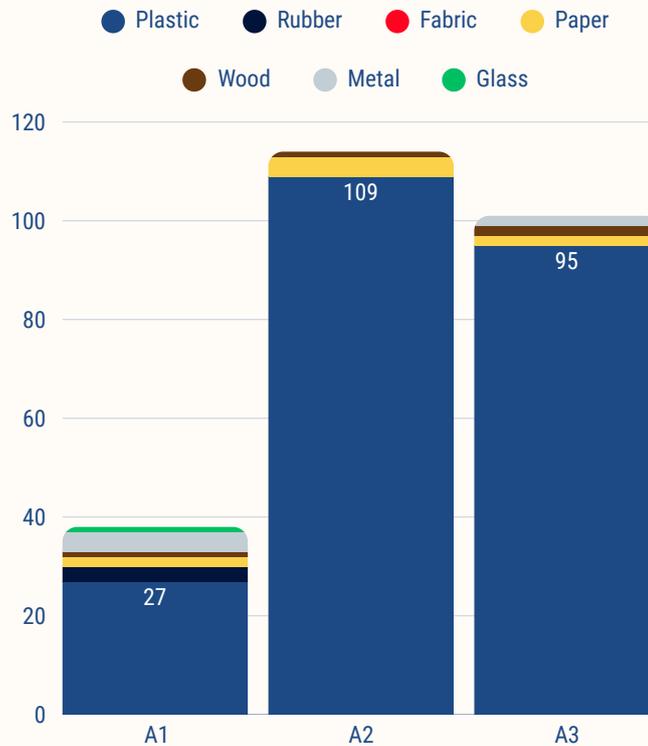


Figure 2: Types of waste recorded per beach as a percentage (%).

In A1, 114 pieces of litter were recorded, 95.6% of which were plastic, with cigarette butts and filters being the most abundant.

In A2, 38 items of litter were recorded, 71% of which were plastic, with the most abundant being "plastic bottles <0.5 l."

In A3, 101 pieces of litter were recorded, 94% of which were plastic, with cigarette butts and filters again being the most abundant.

A2 and A3 belong to the Natura2000 Network of Protected Areas. In the former, few pieces of litter were recorded according to the protocol. Due to its large width, the beach had concentrated waste at the highest points from the sea. For this reason, the volume of waste collected, which was the largest of the three beaches, is not apparent from the record. The area behind the beach is often used by campers, even though it is prohibited, and attracts many visitors during the summer months. Finally, next to the beach is the mouth of the Acheron River, and there is also a fishing shelter within the estuary.

Waste categories

Percentages per waste category

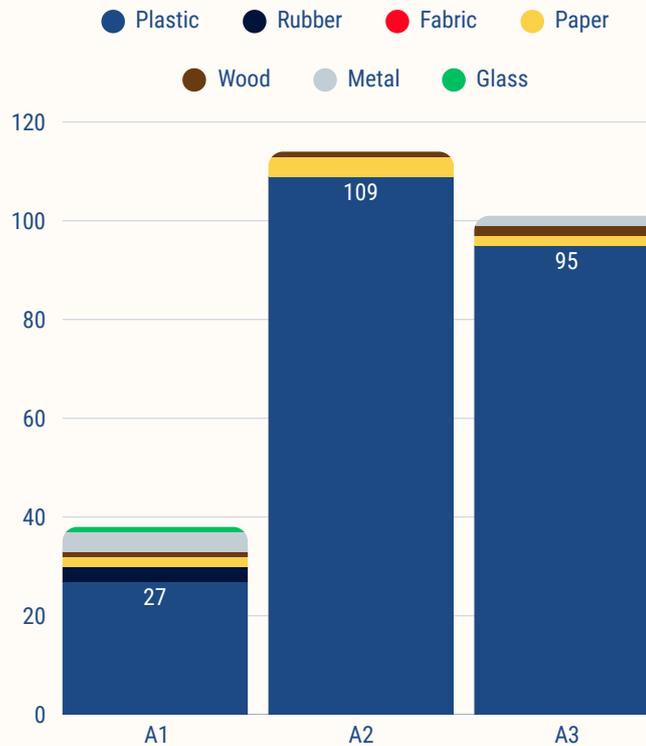


Figure 3: Types of waste recorded per beach as a percentage (%).

A3 was selected due to its ecological significance, as it is close to the Kalamas Delta. The beach is located near the town and port of Igoumenitsa, and there are also food service businesses there. Similarly to Ammoudia beach, visitors camp behind the beach during the summer months, thus increasing the sources of waste that end up on the beach. Among the most abundant types of waste were "cigarette butts and filters" and "straws and stirrers."

Waste categories

OBJECTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
Cigarette butts and filters	30.8%
Plastic pieces 2.5 cm > < 50 cm	17%
Straws and stirrers	8.3%
Caps	4.3%
Food packaging	3.9%

Table 2: The 5 most abundant types of beach litter as a percentage.



Cigarette butts and filters were abundant at all events. To prevent them from being discarded in the environment, ashtrays should be provided in all public recreational areas, as well as in remote areas such as beaches (Charitou et al. Assessing marine litter in Greece. EVMAR program. Greece 2024)

Waste of local interest



On Ammoudia beach, two nets were removed, one of which was almost buried at the back of the beach, while the other was at wave height and therefore quite dangerous, as it could trap and injure organisms.

Many items were removed from Ammoudia beach that were likely linked to the free camping activity, including shoes, sandals, flip-flops, and personal hygiene products such as baby wipes, cosmetics, etc.



Recommendations



The largest amount of fishing-related waste in Greece consists of abandoned fishing gear and comes from commercial and recreational fishing activities. The large amount of such waste, mainly in fishing shelters and adjacent beaches, demonstrates the frequent destruction of fishing gear due to weather conditions, poor maintenance, and improper handling and storage of the equipment, but mainly due to inadequate management and a lack of port facilities for waste collection.

This is why it is essential to install alternative fishing equipment management systems, within the framework of extended producer responsibility, in fishing ports and shelters, as well as in ports and beaches where intensive recreational fishing takes place.

Recommendations



Greek law expressly prohibits free camping in all public areas, as stated in Law 392/1976 (Article 10). "It is prohibited to set up tents or park caravans in archaeological sites, beaches, squares, the edges of public forests, forests, and public spaces in general." Increased checks by municipalities and responsible authorities, especially in Natura2000 areas, and the posting of more signs prohibiting free camping are some of the measures that could reduce this phenomenon.



Underwater cleaning

Action 4 (A4): Port of Preveza

Action 5 (A5): Port of Sivota

Action 6 (A6): Port of Plataria

Table 3: Supplementary data on underwater cleaning as part of the “Prosfero” initiative, April 2025.

ACTION	DATE	VOLUNTEERS	KILOS OF WASTE
A4	08-04-2025	12	130
A5	10-04-2025	4	240
A6	11-04-2025	4	95
Total		20	465



Results of Underwater Waste Recording

As part of the actions and in order to study the abundance of aquatic litter in the area, the aquatic waste on the beaches we visited was recorded and counted in accordance with the protocol established by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

A total of 465 kg of waste was removed from the ports of Preveza, Sivota, and Plataria. A total of 870 items of waste were counted and recorded, 71.2% of which were plastic. In line with global literature and existing data, plastic was the most abundant waste recorded in all underwater clean-up actions.

Waste Categories

The **average percentage** of plastic found in the three ports was 63.85%.

In terms of actions, plastics were the most abundant, mainly plastic bottles (25.8%), cups and cup lids (18.6%), and plastic building materials (3.6%). In the metal category, metal soft drink cans (12.8%) were the most abundant waste.

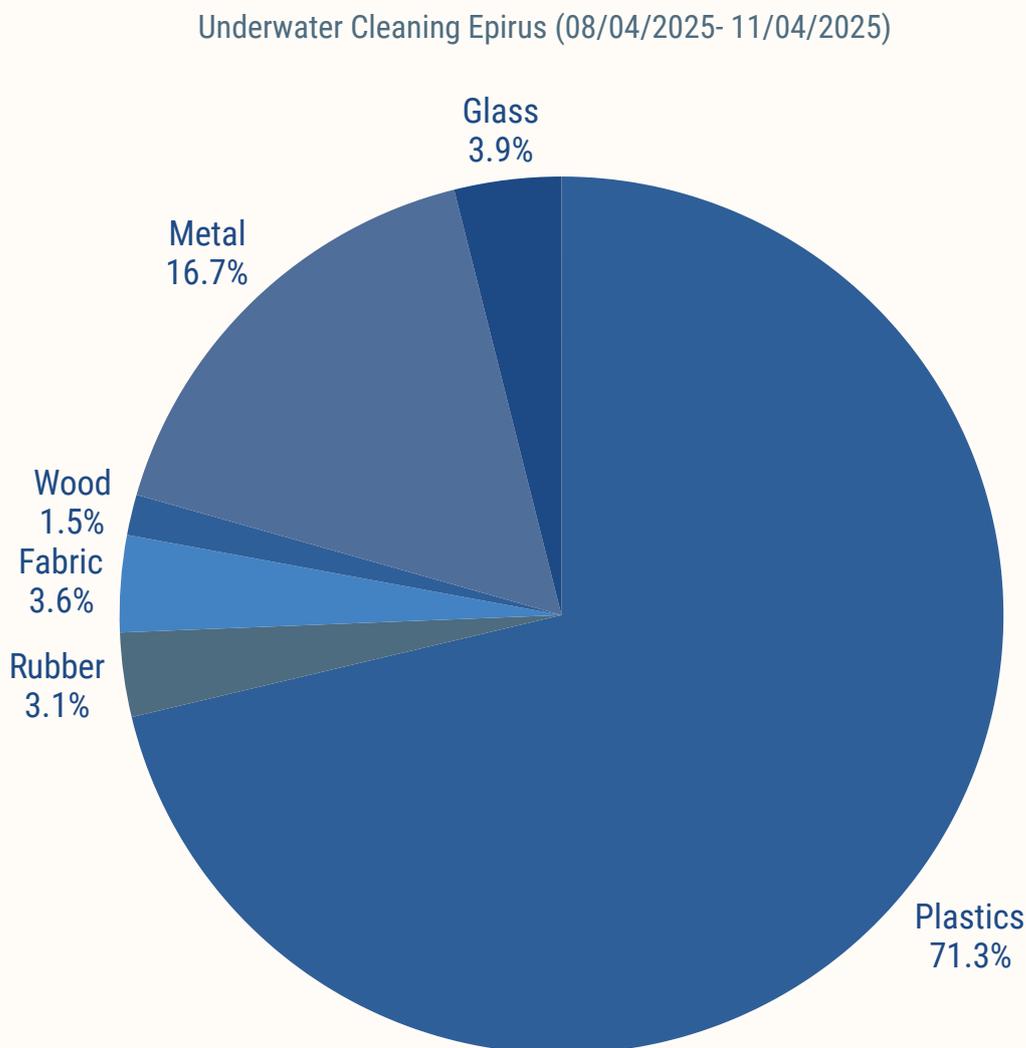


Figure 4: Categories of waste collected during underwater clean-ups, as percentages (%).

The lowest percentage of plastic items was recorded in action A6 with a rate of 47.7%, while the highest was in action A4 with a rate of 77.5%. The next category was metal objects, with percentages in action A4: 16.7%, in action A5: 15.5%, and in action A6: 15.6%.

Waste Categories

Percentages per waste category

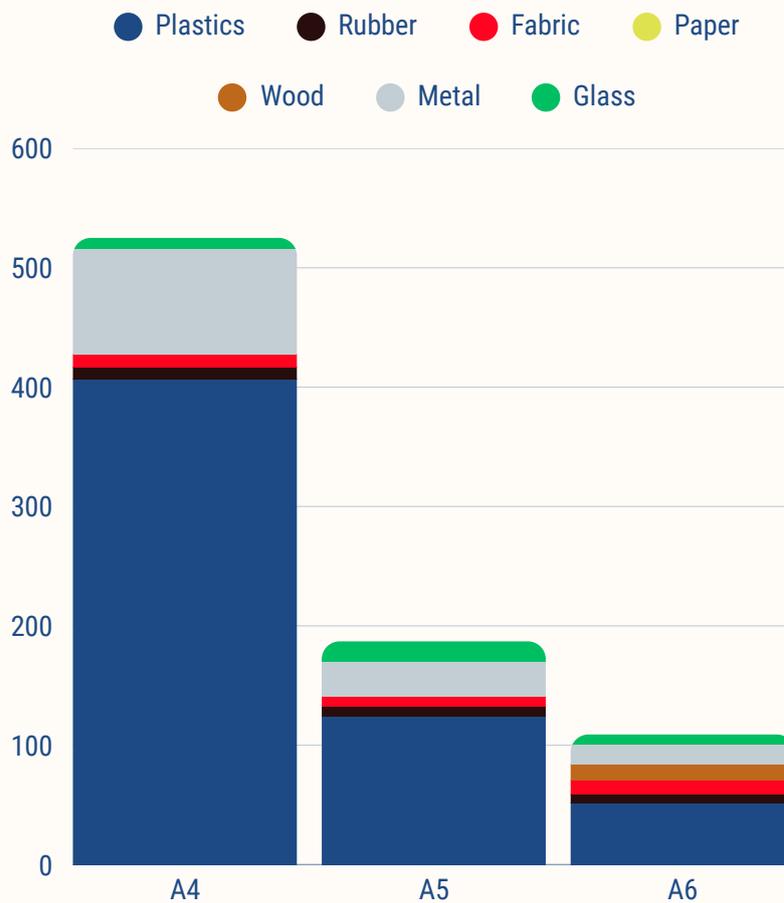


Figure 5: Percentage of categories of objects collected during the three underwater clean-up operations in Epirus.

Plastic was the most abundant category of waste in all actions. Specifically, in action A4, a total of 407 plastic items were removed and recorded, in A5, 124, and in A6, 52. No items were recorded in the paper category. Similarly, in the second most abundant category, metal, 88 metal items were recorded and removed in action A4, 29 in A5, and 17 in A6.

Waste Categories

Table 4: The five most abundant items found during underwater cleanups, expressed as a percentage.

OBJECTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
Plastic bottles	25.8%
Plastic cups and their lids	18.6%
Metal soft drink cans	12.8%
Plastic building materials	3.6%
Glass bottles and pieces	2.1%

A total of 225 plastic bottles, 162 plastic cups and their lids, 32 plastic building materials, 112 metal soft drink cans, and 19 glass bottles and their fragments were removed.



Plastic bottles and single-use plastics are among the most common items found in beach and underwater cleanups. The number of available trash bins must be increased, especially in areas with many visitors.

Recommendations



Plastic bottles, cups, food containers, and aluminum cans are among the most common items found in underwater cleanups. Existing bins should be properly maintained, ensuring that their lids are in good condition and can close properly, and they should be emptied regularly, especially during the summer months. In addition, they should be properly secured in cases of extreme weather conditions.

Plastic bottles and cups are made from PET, a high-value plastic. Therefore, PET items should be disposed of separately by consumers in recycling bins. Similarly, aluminum cans and glass bottles should be collected separately as they also have high recycling value. To reduce plastic water bottles, it is necessary to install and maintain public water fountains, as provided for in the National Waste Prevention Program. (Charitou A., Assessing marine litter in Greece, 2024).

Recommendations



In order to reduce single-use cups and food containers, checks should be carried out on businesses to ensure that economic incentives are given to consumers to use their own reusable cups and containers, as provided for in the European Directive and national legislation. (Charitou A., Assessing marine litter in Greece, 2024).

In particular, during underwater cleaning, utensils such as food containers are among the most common types of waste. That is why it is essential to replace disposable cutlery, plates, and glasses with reusable ones at events, as stipulated by the National Waste Prevention Program. (Charitou A., Assessing marine litter in Greece, 2024).



Participation

In total, more than 150 volunteers participated in the activities in Epirus. Specifically, 151 volunteers and 4 divers contributed to the activities and the removal of waste from beaches and ports. Volunteers and divers, including members of iSea, as well as high schools and local associations and organizations.



54 participants

**Mesopotamos Primary School,
Epirus Protected Areas Management
Unit
Ammoudia Beach**



77 participants

**6th Primary School of Preveza, 1st Model
Gymnasium of Preveza, 2nd Gymnasium of
Preveza, 1st EPAL of Preveza
Paliosaraga Beach**



150 participants

**Nea Fokaia Primary School, Junior High
School, and High School
Drepano Beach - Kalamas Delta**



280 participants

**Nea Kallikratia High School
Preveza Port**

Participation



4 participants

Municipality of Kassandra

Port of Sivota



8 participants

Municipality of Kassandra

Port of Plataria

Informative event

As part of the "Prosfero" program, an informational event was held in Preveza in front of City Hall.

Residents of the city, children, and tourists were informed. Representatives from iSea informed all those present about the program's objectives and actions and distributed informational material with information on marine pollution and recommended measures for its prevention and treatment.



Adults, children, and tourists who participated in the informational event had the opportunity to learn about the most common types of waste found on Greek beaches and see some of the items we have removed from underwater and coastal cleanups. The children played a floor game of questions and learned how they can change their daily habits to be more environmentally friendly. The event was held in collaboration with and under the auspices of the Municipality of Preveza and the Municipal Port Fund of Preveza, with the participation of members of iSea.



Communication Plan

A total of three "stories" were created and shared on iSea's social media channels during the activities in order to inform the public about the progress of the activities, maintain interest in the program, and raise public awareness of the problem of aquatic waste and its impact on the marine ecosystem.

STORY	IMPACT
iSea 1	667
iSea 2	338
iSea 3	239
Σύνολο	1.244

Table 5: Impact of stories on iSea's social media channels



Communication Plan

A press release was created and shared with local media and posted on the iSea website, inviting the local community to participate in the program by providing information about the planned activities.

MEDIA	LINK
Preveza Municipal Radio	<u>Link 1</u>
@preveza	<u>Link 2</u>
epirusbomb.gr facebook	<u>Link 3</u>
epirusbomb.gr	<u>Link 4</u>
Preveza Municipal Radio	<u>Link 5</u>
News from Preveza	<u>Link 6</u>
Preveza today	<u>Link 7</u>

Table 6: Press articles relating to the "Prosfero" program in Epirus

Learn more about the Prosero
program



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Protection of Aquatic Ecosystems

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