

## **Consortium of Stakeholders: a new page for the protection and sustainable development of Northern Cyclades**

*The remote surveillance system of Gyaros is continuing its operation and for the first time baseline knowledge will be created for fish abundance both within and outside of the 3 n.m area of the island.*

The 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Consortium of Stakeholders took place on Friday the 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2018 in Ermoupolis, Syros. The goal of the meeting was the update of its members concerning the official procedure for the legal establishment of the Marine Protected Area of Gyaros and the presentation of the new conservation programs that are being implemented in the area as of January 2018.

For the purposes of the closing of the project CYCLADES LIFE, that officially ceased its operations on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2018, the Consortium's members were informed about a number of issues such as:

- The new law on Protected Areas 4519/2018 and its repercussions on the workings of the Consortium of Stakeholders.
- The official process for the establishment of the Marine Protected Area (MPA) whereby for the first time in the country the management measures for a protected area have already been agreed through a participatory procedure and have been provided to the Ministry of the Environment and Energy.

Building on the work and the vision of the Consortium of Stakeholders for the creation of the Marine Protected Area together with the local societies that will function with the aim of protecting both nature and human activities, a number of new projects have kicked off in the area from bodies that are members of the Consortium of Stakeholders.

WWF Greece, presented its Action Plan for the period 2018-2022 in an effort to effectively protect the natural environment of Gyaros (both marine and terrestrial), support the sustainable development and the management of the Marine Protected Area of Gyaros, as a model MPA in Greece and the entire Mediterranean. The new program for the surveillance system of the island for the period 2018-2022 as well as a new project with the aim of promoting sustainable fisheries for the broader Northern Cyclades area, through co-management and improving fishermen's income.

MOm, informed the Plenary of its participation at the LIFE Andros Park program and announced a new collaboration that will contribute to the mapping of Cyclades concerning the population of the Mediterranean Monk Seal. The Hellenic Centre for Marine Research, having Gyaros as the main focus, will for the first time create baseline knowledge for the estimation of the abundance of fish stocks of the area. Thus, upon the creation of the MPA of Gyaros, scientists will have an estimate of the fish stock's abundance both prior to and after the creation of the MPA.

The Decentralised Administration of Cyclades SA publicly announced its intention to draft a plan for the promotion of the Marine Protected Area of Gyaros and Harokopio University of Athens, responsible for the socio-economic research on the islands of Syros and Andros during the CYCLADES LIFE project, highlighted the fact that the future of the Marine Protected Area depends on consensus amongst the members of the Consortium so that all issues, even legal ones, are properly managed.

**Notes for journalists:**

You can find out more on the CYCLADES LIFE project [here](#).

**More information:**

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The CYCLADES LIFE project is being implemented by WWF Greece together with the Ministry of Environment and Energy, the Decentralized Administrative Authority of the Aegean, the Development Corporation of the Cyclades SA, the Harokopio University of Athens, MOM/Hellenic Society for the Protection of the Monk Seal and the Italian Institute Tethys.

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The project CYCLADES LIFE, “Integrated monk seal conservation of Northern Cyclades”, is being implemented with the contribution of the LIFE financial instrument of the European Union and the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation (<http://www.fpa2.com/home.html>) and the Green Fund.

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