

RECONNECT

Regional cooperation for the transnational ecosystem sustainable development

Interreg V-B “Balkan-Mediterranean 2014-2020”

Deliverable 2.5.2

Open Day Activities

WP2: Project Communication & Dissemination

Responsible Partner: **Management Agency of Karpathos and Saria (Karpathos, Greece)**



Deliverable team: **DFMR (& external Experts MER Lab Ltd / DBS-UCY)**



**DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES
AND MARINE RESEARCH (DFMR)**



University of Cyprus
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Sciences

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Information on the RECONNECT project

Regional cooperation for the transnational ecosystem sustainable development (RECONNECT) project aims to develop strategies for sustainable management of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Natura 2000 sites. The study areas are characterised by similar habitats in different countries, which are threatened by common pressures. Creating a transnational cooperative network to confront under a common approach the environmental threats of ecosystems with a high natural and cultural interest, is the overall goal of this project. The establishment of common practices and a joint regional strategy are the main challenges of RECONNECT.

The overall objective of the project is to promote efficient management of natural systems which will enhance the competence of local management authorities through the development of a multidisciplinary Decision Support System (DSS). The new transnational holistic approach which will be developed, will change the current protection strategies in the Balkan-Mediterranean area promoting more efficient and accurate management practices. The main outputs of the RECONNECT project will provide information concerning habitat attributes, as well as the essential biodiversity, socio-economic and cultural variables, which will be freely available as tools through a web-based platform.

These outputs will be beneficial for

- local, regional and national authorities by promoting the sustainability of marine ecosystems;
- management agencies by enhancing their management toolbox;
- non-governmental organizations (NGOs) by improving their activities through the suggested strategies; and
- citizens, as their involvement during the project will increase their environmental awareness.

The transnational approach that will be used during the project will combine ecological and genetic methodologies for the biodiversity assessment, as well as socio-economic aspects, under the umbrella of a common DSS promoting joint policies and practices. The protection and conservation of areas with high ecological and economical value aims to harmonize the socio-economic and legal framework between the participating countries, something which could not be achieved individually at a national level. The design of new tools such as the DSS and the Handbook of management practices will be developed through the combination of multidisciplinary methodologies targeting to evaluate ecosystem quality and to promote the sustainable conservation of these vulnerable and fragile ecosystems. During its implementation, RECONNECT project will address consistently EU horizontal principles such as sustainable development, equal opportunities and non-discrimination and equality between men and women. The project's initial duration was 24 months, starting from 15 September 2017 and ending on 14 September 2019. However, due to a number of reasons, RECONNECT project had an approval of two duration extensions, and will now be completed on the 31st of December 2020.

The project is separated into six Working Packages, namely (i) Project Management & Coordination, (ii) Project Communication & Dissemination, (iii) Mapping and evaluating of Marine Protected Areas and Natura 2000 habitats, (iv) Enriching management toolbox with ecosystem connectivity-based instruments, (v) Citizen Science initiative: Involving people in ecosystems restoration, and (vi) Decision Support System (DSS) for the ecosystem management and sustainable development.

The transnational approach that will be used during the project will combine ecological and genetic methodologies for the biodiversity assessment, as well as socio-economic aspects, under the umbrella of a common DSS promoting joint policies and practices. The protection and conservation of areas with high ecological and economical value aims to harmonize the socio-economic and legal framework between the participating countries, something which could not be achieved individually at a national level. The design of new tools such as the DSS and the Handbook of management practices will be

developed through the combination of multidisciplinary methodologies targeting to evaluate ecosystem quality and to promote the sustainable conservation of these vulnerable and fragile ecosystems. During its implementation, RECONNECT project will address consistently EU horizontal principles such as sustainable development, equal opportunities and non-discrimination and equality between men and women.

The study areas of the project include MPAs and Natura 2000 sites. One key study area will be visited in each country (Greece, Cyprus, Albania, and Bulgaria). Specifically, the regional marine park of northern Karpathos Saria and Astakidonision (GR4210003) will be targeted in Greece; the MPA of Cape Greko (CY3000005) in Cyprus; the proposed MPA and existing Coastal Protected Area (CPA) Ksamil Bay and Islands in Albania, and the Natura 2000 site Gradina-Zlatna Ribka (BG0000146) in Bulgaria.

1.2 Scope of Deliverable

The Deliverable 2.2 'Open days Activities' is one of the outcomes of WP2: Project Communication & Dissemination. According to the Communication manual for the RECONNECT Project, two Open day activities need to be organised in each country.

The scope of this deliverable is to present information on the events that were carried out in Cyprus.

Cyprus (PP4, PP5)

The Department of Fisheries and Marine Research (DFMR) (PP5) and the Department of Biological Sciences of the University of Cyprus (PP4), together with DFMR's external experts from Marine and Environmental Research (MER) Lab Ltd organised the three Open day activity events in Cyprus. The 1st event was held during the Researcher's Night Event that was organized by the Research Promotion Foundation. on the 27-28th of September 2018. The 2nd event was an open event about the Marine Environment that was held at the Environmental Center of Cavo Greko on the 27th March 2019. The 3rd event took place again during the Researcher's Night Event, which was organized by the

Research Promotion Foundation. on the 26-27th of September 2019. Finally, the RECONNECT project was presented during participations in other events and workshops.

2. CYPRUS OPEN-DAY ACTIVITY EVENTS

2.1 PRESENTING THE RECONNECT PROJECT AT THE RESEARCHER'S NIGHT 2018

2.1.1 General information

The “Researcher’s Night” is an event organized by the Research Promotion Foundation (RPF) in collaboration with academic and research institutions as well as other organizations in Cyprus. The event is an initiative of the European Commission that takes place simultaneously in almost all European countries, and funded under the “Horizon 2020” Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action.

The 2018 event took place at the Lanitis Carob Mill Complex in Limassol on Thursday 27th, and Friday, 28th of September 2018 (Fig.1). Numerous visitors had the opportunity to enjoy a creative event dedicated to science and research, through experiments, games, competitions and music. Organized visits of primary schools (students’ age 6-12 years old) were carried out on Thursday from 10:30 to 13:30. Organized visits of secondary education schools (students’ age 13-18 years old) were carried out on Friday from 10:30 to 13:30 while the event was open to the public on Friday from 17:00 to 00:00. Audiences of different ages had the opportunity to meet up with Cypriot researchers and see their work, in a festive, friendly atmosphere. In each stand researchers presented their work and informed the public about the role and importance of research in the modern world as well as the practical applications of their research results in everyday life. At the same time, participants had the opportunity to engage in hands-on experiments. The Researcher’s Night agenda is presented in Figure 2.



Figure 1. Poster prepared by the Research Promotion Foundation for the Researcher's Night event. (in Greek)

ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑ

Πέμπτη 27/9

- 10:30 - 13:30 Διαδραστική Έκθεση**
- 10:30 - 13:30 Οργανωμένες επισκέψεις σχολείων (Δημοτικά)
 - 10:30 & 12:00 Διαδραστικό παραμύθι (C27)
 - 11:00 Κυνήγι θησαυρού (A21)

Παρασκευή 28/9

- 10:30 - 13:30 Διαδραστική Έκθεση**
- 10:30 - 13:30 Οργανωμένες επισκέψεις σχολείων (Γυμνάσια και Λύκεια)
 - 11:00 - 12:00 Ανοικτή συζήτηση: Η Έρευνα ως επαγγελματική καριέρα (C31)
- 17:00 - 00:00 Διαδραστική Έκθεση**
- 17:00 - 19:00 Live Link με το ΚΑΝΑΛΙ 6 (B5)
 - 17:00 - 20:00 Διαγωνισμός S-Factor (C32)
 - 18:00 & 20:00 Διαδραστικό παραμύθι (C27)
 - 19:00 Κυνήγι θησαυρού (A21)
 - 19:00 - 20:00 Hall of FameLab (C30α)
 - 20:00 - 20:20 Θέατρο «ΠΡΑΞΕΩΝ ΣΧΕΣΕΙΣ» (C30β)
- 20:30 Τελετή Βραβεύσεων (C30γ)**
- 20:30 - 20:45 Μουσική Παράσταση από τη χορωδία Amalgamation Choir
 - 20:45 - 21:30 Τελετή απονομής βραβείου στον Δρα Βάσο Καραγιώργη
 - Απονόμες βραβείων διαγωνισμών ΦΟΙΤΩ και S-Factor
 - 21:30 - 22:30 Δεξίωση (Cocktail Party "Meet and Greet")



Figure 2. Researchers Night Agenda. (in Greek)

2.1.2 RECONNECT Information desk

The visitors had the opportunity to be informed about the RECONNECT project and its tasks, and through interactive activities and games to learn more about the importance of *Posidonia oceanica*, the associated species that are linked to *Posidonia* meadows and the threats that the meadows are currently facing.



Figure 3. RECONNECT information desk (Photos MER Lab Ltd).

2.1.3 Informational material

A presentation was prepared about the RECONNECT project, converted to video and was displayed in TV Screens together with videos on the marine environment of Cyprus. The RECONNECT poster was placed on the wall so that visitors could watch it (Fig.4a). Furthermore, informational material about the marine environment of Cyprus *Posidonia oceanica* and other protected species such as monk seals were given to the visitors (Fig.4b).

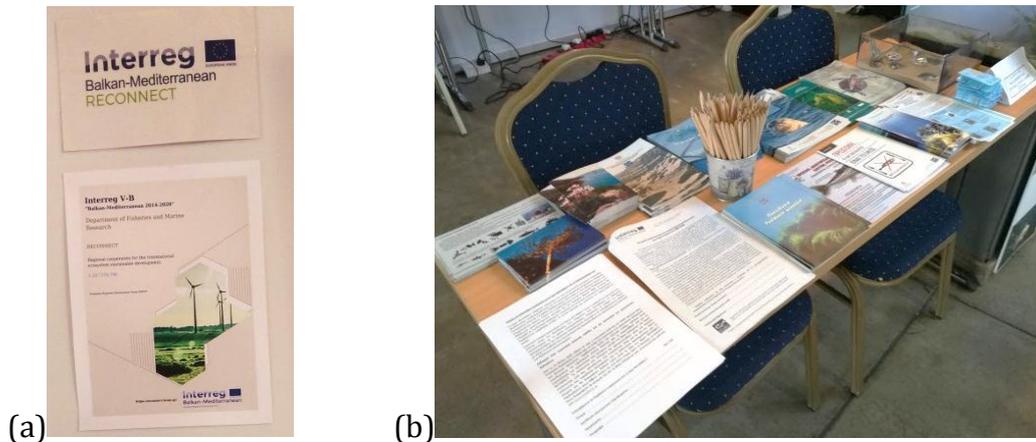


Figure 4. (a) RECONNECT poster and (b) information material (Photos MER Lab Ltd).

2.1.4 *Posidonia oceanica* aquarium and laboratory

A 500-litter aquarium with approximately 36 shoot fragments of *P. oceanica*, fixed at the bottom layer of the tank was setup (Fig.5). Lighting was used to make the aquarium more attractive towards the public. A multistage canister filter and an aerator pump were used to filter out any suspended sediments and to oxygenate the water. Two 60 x 60 cm foam boards with *Posidonia oceanica* related pictures were attached to the aquarium.

Furthermore, a laboratory tray (Fig.5) was placed at the front of the aquarium displaying the adult, intermediate and juvenile leaves of a shoot, and fibrous balls formed by *P. oceanica* detritus. Finally, a compilation of fascinating videos, photographs and facts about the *P. oceanica* was prepared and displayed on a small computer screen that was adjusted next to the aquarium.

Through this set-up, visitors were able to observe the seagrass alive, learn more about its importance and threats, and observe some of the *P. oceanica* sampling techniques used by researchers at the field, as well as at the lab.



Figure 5. Aquarium and laboratory trays with *Posidonia oceanica* shoots set up at the event (Photos MER Lab Ltd).

2.1.5 Benthic macrofauna laboratory

A mini benthic macrofauna laboratory was set-up to inform visitors about the procedures of sorting and identifying benthic macrofauna organisms that are associated with *P. oceanica* meadows. Sediment with stained macrofauna organisms were placed in sorting traces (Fig.6). The visitors were able to pick up the organisms and observed them under a stereoscope (Fig.7). There were three stereoscopes available, one connected by a camera to a TV monitor so that people were able to engage into an interactive discussion about the systematic taxonomy of the species.



Figure 6. Mini benthic macrofauna laboratory (sorting and identification) (Photos MER Lab Ltd.).



Figure 7. Visitors “working” at the mini benthic macrofauna laboratory (Photos MER Lab Ltd.).

2.1.6 Visitors highlights

Overall, the information desk attracted numerous people from various backgrounds and age groups (Fig.8). Most of the visitors were keen to learn about the seagrass and impressed by the ecosystem services that it provides. The visitors had the opportunity to ask questions and share their concerns on several environmental issues related to the marine environment. Some of the most frequently asked questions were “Why is *P. oceanica* such an important species?”, “Why is it under protection?” and “What species live in the *P. oceanica* meadows?”. It is worth noting that many visitors did not know that *P. oceanica* is present in Cyprus. However, they realized after discussion that *P. oceanica* is the ‘well-known’ dead brown plant (*Posidonia* banquettes) that can be found at the beaches in the winter season. Treasure games were conducted with children at which they had to complete that *P. oceanica* was the plant that took its name from the god Poseidon, from Ancient Greece.



Figure 8. DFMR researchers interacting with the visitors and explaining the characteristics and importance of *Posidonia* seagrass (Photos MER Lab Ltd).

2.2 OPEN-DAY ACTIVITY EVENT AT THE ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER OF CAVO GREKO

2.2.1 General information

On the 27th of March 2019, a 2nd open day event for the marine environment was organised by the DFMR and the Department of Biological Sciences, University of Cyprus, with the assistance of MER Lab Ltd and AP Marine Environmental Consultancy Ltd (DBS-UCY's external expert) at the Environmental Center of Cavo Greko.

The agenda (Fig. 9) and the event was designed in such a way so that it included two main parts. The first Part aimed to inform the participants about the RECONNECT project and its actions. The second Part aimed to present the work of National and European research projects relevant to the marine environment, that are indirectly related to the RECONNECT project. All the presentations can be found [here](#). Parallel activities were also carried out during the coffee break at the Environmental Centre of Cavo Greko and included: (i) Activities at the Cavo Greko Natural Trail and (ii) Stereoscopic observation of marine organisms.

To facilitate with the organisation of the event, an online [registration](#) was developed (Fig. 10). Furthermore, information material was given to the participants.

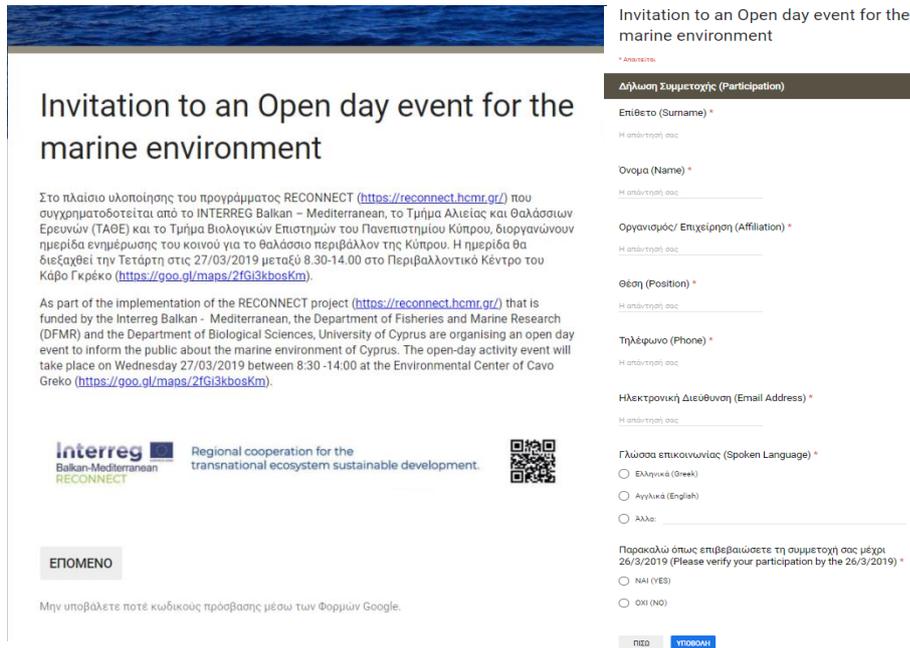


*Open day activity event for the marine environment at the
 Environmental Centre of Cavo Greko*

Agenda

Part A: RECONNECT	8:30 - 9:00	Registrations
	9:00- 9:05	Welcome speeches <i>Mrs Marina Argyrou, Director of Department of Fisheries and Marine Research (DFMR)</i>
	9:05 - 9:20	Presenting the RECONNECT research project <i>Mrs Yiota Lazarou, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Cyprus</i>
	9:20 - 9:40	Information on the Cavo Greko protected area / Video <i>Mr. Chrysostomos Chrysostomou, Forestry Department</i>
	9:40 - 10:00	The marine environment of Cavo Gkreko (RECONNECT) <i>Dr. Demetris Kletou, DFMR's external expert</i> <i>Marine and Environmental Research (MER) Lab Ltd</i>
	10:00 - 10:30	Citizen Science involvement in monitoring the marine environment of Cavo Greko (RECONNECT) <i>Mr. Antonis Petrou, UCY's external expert</i> <i>AP Marine Environmental Consultancy Ltd</i>
	10:30 - 10:40	Discussion
	10:40 - 11:40	Coffee break
		Parallel Activities of the Environmental Centre of Cavo Greko <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Observation of marine organisms in stereoscopes (laboratory)</i> • <i>Activities at the Cavo Greko Natural Trail (identification of plant, birds and terrestrial invertebrate organisms)</i>
Part B: Marine Research Projects	11:40 - 12:00	Cetacean survey along the Cypriot coasts <i>Mr. Savvas Michalides, Department of Fisheries and Marine Research</i>
	12:00 - 12:20	LIFE EUROTURTLES: Collective actions for improving the conservation status of the EU sea turtle populations <i>Mrs Melina Marcou, Department of Fisheries and Marine Research</i>
	12:20 - 12:40	Andikat: Diving Routes in Marine Protected Areas of the Eastern Mediterranean - Development of Diving Tourism Network <i>Mrs Eleni Nikita, Department of Fisheries and Marine Research</i>
	12:40 - 13:00	RELIONMED LIFE: Preventing a LIONfish invasion in the MEDiterranean through early response and targeted Removal <i>Dr. Niki Chartosia, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Cyprus</i>
	13:00-13:20	MELTEMI: Wind against marine litter <i>Dr. Maria Rousou, Department of Fisheries and Marine Research</i>
	13:20-13:30	Discussion End of event / Certificates Light lunch

Figure 9. Open day activity event agenda.



Invitation to an Open day event for the marine environment

Στο πλαίσιο υλοποίησης του προγράμματος RECONNECT (<https://reconnect.hcmr.gr/>) που συγχρηματοδοτείται από το INTERREG Balkan - Mediterranean, το Τμήμα Αλιείας και Θαλάσσιων Ερευνών (ΤΑΘΕ) και το Τμήμα Βιολογικών Επιστημών του Πανεπιστημίου Κύπρου, διοργανώνουν ημερίδα ενημέρωσης του κοινού για το θαλάσσιο περιβάλλον της Κύπρου. Η ημερίδα θα διεξαχθεί την Τετάρτη στις 27/03/2019 μεταξύ 8.30-14.00 στο Περιβαλλοντικό Κέντρο του Κάβο Γκρέκο (<https://goo.gl/maps/2fGi3kbosKm>).

As part of the implementation of the RECONNECT project (<https://reconnect.hcmr.gr/>) that is funded by the Interreg Balkan - Mediterranean, the Department of Fisheries and Marine Research (DFMR) and the Department of Biological Sciences, University of Cyprus are organising an open day event to inform the public about the marine environment of Cyprus. The open-day activity event will take place on Wednesday 27/03/2019 between 8:30-14:00 at the Environmental Center of Cavo Greko (<https://goo.gl/maps/2fGi3kbosKm>).

ΕΠΙΘΕΤΟ (Surname) *

Η απόκρισή σας _____

Όνομα (Name) *

Η απόκρισή σας _____

Οργανισμός/ Επιχείρηση (Affiliation) *

Η απόκρισή σας _____

Θέση (Position) *

Η απόκρισή σας _____

Τηλέφωνο (Phone) *

Η απόκρισή σας _____

Ηλεκτρονική Διεύθυνση (Email Address) *

Η απόκρισή σας _____

Γλώσσα επικοινωνίας (Spoken Language) *

Ελληνικά (Greek)

Αγγλικά (English)

Άλλο: _____

Παρακαλώ όπως επιβεβαιώσετε τη συμμετοχή σας μέχρι 26/3/2019 (Please verify your participation by the 26/3/2019) *

ΝΑΙ (YES)

ΟΧΙ (NO)

ΠΙΣ

Μην υποβάλετε ποτέ κωδικούς πρόσβασης μέσω των Φορμών Google.

Figure 10. Online registration for the participants was enabled through google forms.

An email invitation was sent to the stakeholders. The invitation included the following description: *“As part of the implementation of the RECONNECT project (<https://reconnect.hcmr.gr/>) that is funded by the Interreg Balkan - Mediterranean, the Department of Fisheries and Marine Research (DFMR) and the Department of Biological Sciences, University of Cyprus are organising an open day event to inform the public about the marine environment of Cyprus. The open-day activity event will take place on Wednesday 27/03/2019 between 8:30-14:00 at the Environmental Center of Cavo Greko (<https://goo.gl/maps/2fGi3kbosKm>).”*

DFMR, DBS-UCY, MER Lab Ltd. and AP Marine disseminated the event with posts in the social media, websites and the press (Table 1).

Table 1. Dissemination of the event to the public.

Websites and press	Γραφείο τύπου και πληροφοριών Τμήμα Αλιείας και Θαλάσσιων Ερευνών Larnaca Voice University of Cyprus
Social media	Cyclamen Project Reconnect BMP project Relionmed-Life GreenCyprus Marine and Environmental Research - MER Lab AP Marine Environmental Consultancy Ltd

2.2.2 Registrations

The registration of participants started before the event and dissemination material was given to the public (Fig. 11).



Figure 11. Banners of the RECONNECT project and other marine related projects, were placed at the entrance. Registration and informational materials provided to the participants (Photos MER Lab Ltd.).

2.2.3 Welcome speech and presentations

The Director of DFMR, Mrs Marina Argyrou (Fig. 12), welcomed the participants to the event. Brief information on each of the presentations is provided below.



Figure 12. Mrs Marina Argyrou, Director of DFMR gave a welcoming speech and opened the event (Photo MER Lab Ltd).

2.2.4 Part A: RECONNECT Project

1. Presenting the RECONNECT research project

Mrs Yiota Lazarou from the Department of Biological Sciences, University of Cyprus presented the RECONNECT project, its main objectives and findings up to that date, and following activities of the project (Fig. 13).



Figure 13. Mrs Yiota Lazarou from the Department of Biological Sciences, University of Cyprus presented the RECONNECT project (Photos MER Lab Ltd).

2. Information on the Cavo Greko protected area/ Video

Mr. Chrysostomos Chrysostomou from the Forestry Department informed the participants about the Cavo Greko protected area and the Environmental Center of Cavo Greko and a video presenting the historical and the ecological characteristics of the area was shown to the audience (Fig. 14).



Figure 14. Mr. Chrysostomos Chrysostomou from the Forestry Department presented information about Cavo Greko (Photos MER Lab Ltd).

3. The marine environment of Cavo Greko (RECONNECT)

Dr Demetris Kletou, DFMR's external expert from the Marine and Environmental Research (MER) Lab Ltd. gave a speech about the marine environment of Cavo Greko (Fig. 15). The presentation included information on marine habitat types according to the Habitat Directive 92/43/EEC found in Cavo Greko, and the results of a research project, DFMR tender, that monitored the marine species of the area for two years; with a focus on alien species. A brief introduction was given on the RELIONMED project, a LIFE project that aims to tackle the lionfish invasion in focal areas of Cyprus, including Cavo Greko. Emphasis was given to the field and laboratory work implemented up to that date, as part of the RECONNECT project including: biodiversity assessment, marine litter assessment, *P. oceanica* demography assessment, and the collection of samples of water, sediment and macrofauna for three sites in the Cavo Greo area.



Figure 15. Dr Demetris Kletou, Marine & Environmental Research (MER) Lab, presented information about the marine environment of Cavo Greko (Photos MER Lab Ltd).

4. Citizen Science involvement in monitoring the marine environment of Cavo Greko (RECONNECT)

Mr. Antonis Petrou, UCY's external expert from AP Marine Environmental Consultancy Ltd, gave a presentation on how the Citizen Science involvement can help with the monitoring of the marine environment of Cavo Greko (Fig. 16). It included among others information about the Cavo Greko area and how citizens (divers) can assist in the

monitoring of *P. oceanica* growth in the permanent quadrats that were set in soft substrates.



Figure 16. Mr Antonis Petrou, AP Marine Environmental Consultancy Ltd, presented the citizen science aspect of RECONNECT project (Photos MER Lab Ltd).

5. Discussions

Following the completion of part A, an open discussion was held about the project. The participants asked questions such as when would they be expected to participate in the citizen science activities and if any seminars like the one held will be organized in the future. There was also a discussion on the recent establishment of MPAs in Cyprus and the increasing number of alien species' sightings in these areas.

2.2.5 Part B: Other Research Projects related to the marine environment

1. Cetacean survey along the Cypriot coasts

Mr. Savvas Michalides from the DFMR presented the results of the Cetacean survey that was carried out along the Cypriot coasts, in order to assess their population and identify possible impacts (Fig. 17). Finally, a video produced from footage collected during the Project co-funded by the European Union and National Funds of the participating countries

cetaceans' surveys was presented. The survey has an indirect link to the RECONNECT Project as cetaceans were sighted near the Cavo Greko area as part of the sampling surveys carried out.



Figure 17. Mr. Savvas Michalides from DFMR, presented the cetacean surveys (Photos MER Lab Ltd).

2. LIFE EUROTURTLES: Collective actions for improving the conservation status of the EU sea turtle populations

Ms Melina Marcou from the DFMR presented the LIFE EUROTURTLES project (Fig. 18). The project aims to improve the Conservation Status of two sea turtle priority species by increasing awareness about the species, providing mitigation of threats at nesting sites, increasing rehabilitation capacity and reducing the impact of ghost gear in turtles. The LIFE EUROTURTLES project has an indirect link to the RECONNECT Project as Cavo

Greko is a nesting site for these sea turtles and if found injured, they are transferred to the Meneou Center for treatments and rehabilitation. More information on the project can be found [here](#).



Figure 18. Ms. Melina Marcou from DFMR, presented the EUROTURTLES project (Photos MER Lab Ltd).

3. Andikat: Diving Routes in Marine Protected Areas of the Eastern Mediterranean - Development of Diving Tourism Network

Ms Eleni Nikita from the DFMR presented the Andikat Project (Fig. 19). The project is funded by Interreg Mediterranean. It aims to develop diving tourism and promotion of best practices in diving routes in protected areas. The Andikat project has an indirect link to the RECONNECT Project as they both deal with citizen science and diving tourism. More information on the project can be found [here](#).



Figure 19. Ms. Eleni Nikita, from DFMR presenting Andikat (Photos MER Lab Ltd).

4. RELIONMED-LIFE: Preventing a LIONfish invasion in the MEDiterranean through early response and targeted Removal

Dr Niki Chartosia from the Department of Biological Sciences, University of Cyprus, presented the RELIONMED LIFE project (Fig. 20). The project aims to study the biology and ecology of the lionfish populations, create surveillance and early detection system and develop removal action teams for coordinated and opportunistic removal of lionfish around Cyprus. The RELIONMED-LIFE project has an indirect link to the RECONNECT Project as it focused at Cavo Greko where lionfish seems to proliferate. More information on the project can be found [here](#).



Figure 20 Dr Niki Chartosia from UCY presenting RELIONMED (Photos MER Lab Ltd).

5. MELTEMI: Wind against marine litter

Dr Maria Rousou from the DFMR presented the MELTEMI project (Fig. 21). MELTEMI is also an Interreg V-B Balkan-Mediterranean 2014-2020 project that promotes the cooperation between four countries: Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Cyprus in a joint effort against marine litter. The overall objective of the MELTEMI project is along with the assessment of marine litter in beaches to enhance the legal framework and the

capacity of public authorities, stakeholders and the society on mitigating marine litter pollution.

Through a series of interconnected actions, MELTEMI foresees the active engagement of the society and key-stakeholders by informing, educating, training and networking them with reference to an evidence-based policy assessment framework for marine litter. MELTEMI's approach is based on the creation of a transnational network among GR, CY, BG and AL where coastal marine litter will be assessed and global best practices and tools will be reviewed, in order to be country-specific. With the active participation of stakeholders, MELTEMI aims to propose National and Transnational Action Plans for the reduction of marine litter.

The MELTEMI project has an indirect link to the RECONNECT Project as the marine litter survey assessments were also carried out in Cavo Greko. More information on the project can be found [here](#).



Figure 21. Dr Maria Rousou, from DFMR who facilitated the organisation of the event and presented the MELTEMI project (Photo MER Lab Ltd).

2.2.6 Parallel Activities

During the coffee break parallel activities were carried out at the Environmental Centre of Cavo Greko. These included: (i) Activities at the Cavo Greko Natural Trail by the staff of the Cavo Greko Environmental Center (identification of plants, birds and terrestrial invertebrate organisms) by giving to the audience guides and materials for identification of the key species of the fauna and flora of the region and (ii) Observation in stereoscopes of marine organisms at the laboratory that were collected in the area as part of the RECONNECT Project (Fig. 22).





Figure 22. Parallel activities during the coffee break at the Environmental Centre of Cavo Greko: Activities at the Cavo Greko Natural Trail (Left) and Observation of marine organisms in stereoscopes (Right) (Photos MER Lab Ltd).

2.3 PRESENTING THE RECONNECT PROJECT AT THE RESEARCHERS NIGHT 2019

The 2019 event took place at the Filoxenia Centre in Nicosia, on Thursday 26th, and Friday, 27th of September 2019 (Fig.23). As in 2018, numerous visitors had the opportunity to be informed on science and research, through experiments, games, competitions and music. Organized visits of primary schools (students' age 6-12 years old) were carried out on Thursday from 10:00 to 13:30. Organized visits of secondary education schools (students' age 13-18 years old) were carried out on Friday from 10:00 to 13:30 while the event was open to the public on Friday from 17:00 to 00:00. Audience of different ages had the opportunity to meet up with Cypriot researchers and see their work, in a festive, friendly atmosphere. In each stand researchers presented their work and informed the public about the role and importance of research in the modern world as well as the practical applications of their research results in everyday life. At the same time, participants had the opportunity to engage in hands-on experiments. The Researcher's Night agenda is presented in Figure 24.

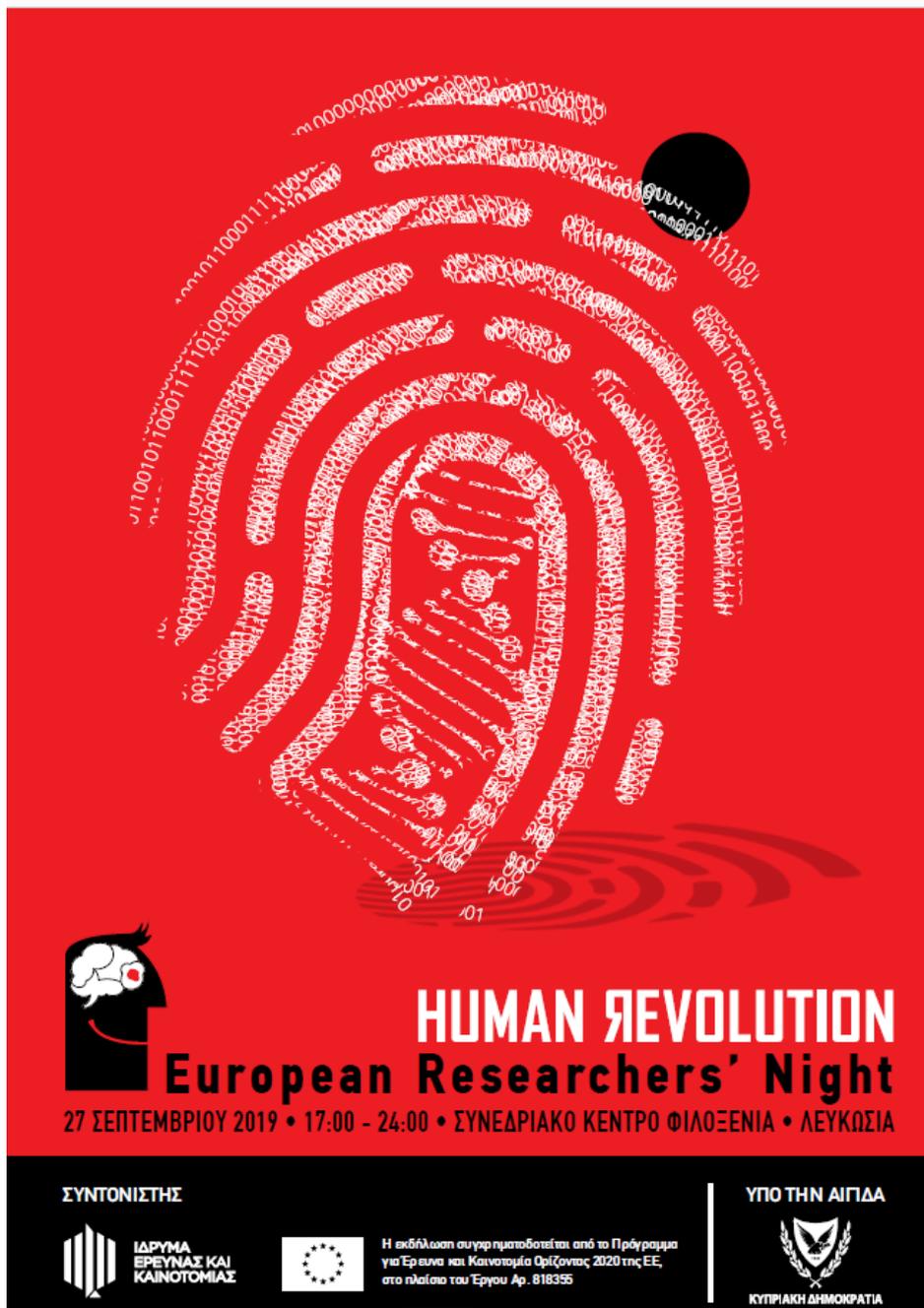


Figure 23. Poster prepared by the Research Promotion Foundation for the Researcher's Night event. (in Greek)

Πέμπτη 26/09

10:00 – 13:30 Οργανωμένες επισκέψεις σχολείων (Δημοτικά)

10:00 – 13:30 Θεατρική Παράσταση «Ταξίδι στον Μπλε Κύκλο»
(για σχολεία)

Παρασκευή 27/09

Πρωινό μέρος της Εκδήλωσης

10:00 – 13:30 Οργανωμένες επισκέψεις σχολείων (Γυμνάσια και Λύκεια)

10:00 – 11:00 Θεατρική Παράσταση «Ταξίδι στον Μπλε Κύκλο»
(για σχολεία)

11:00 – 12:00 Ανοικτή συζήτηση: Η έρευνα ως επαγγελματική καριέρα

Απογευματινό μέρος της Εκδήλωσης

17:00 – 24:00 Διαδραστική Έκθεση

17:00 – 19:00 Live Link με το RADIO SFERA

17:00 – 19:30 Διαγωνισμός S-Factor & STEAME

18:00 – 19:30 Θεατρική Παράσταση «Ταξίδι στον Μπλε Κύκλο»

19:30 Τελετή Βραβεύσεων

- Μουσικό δρώμενο με την Αυγή Χατζηπαύλου
- Απονομή Βραβείων από τον Έντιμο Υπουργό Οικονομικών
κ. Χάρη Γεωργιάδη (ΦΟΙΤΩ, S-FACTOR, STEAME)

21:30 – 22:30 Δεξίωση

(*"Meet and Greet" & MSCA Poster Exhibition*)

21:30 – 22:30 Live music 'Researchers Unplugged'

**Βρες αναλυτικό χάρτη
στο πίσω μέρος**

Figure 24. Researchers Night Agenda. (in Greek)

The visitors had the opportunity to be informed about the RECONNECT project and its tasks, and through interactive activities and games to learn more about the importance the native and alien species, including the Lionfish, that can be found in Cavo Greko area, as well as all around the Cypriot coasts (Fig. 25).

ΞΕΝΙΚΑ VS ΤΟΠΙΚΑ ΘΑΛΑΣΣΙΑ ΕΙΔΗ

Γ8

Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου - Τμήμα Αλιείας και Θαλασσίων Ερευνών &
Τμήμα Βιολογικών Επιστημών, University of Plymouth, Marine and
Environmental Research Lab Ltd & Enalia Physis Environmental
Research Centre

*Μαρία Ρούσου, Σάββας Μιχαηλίδης, Κωνσταντίνος Αντωνιάδης, Μελίνα
Μάρκου, Νικόλας Μιχαηλίδης, Γιώτα Λαζάρου, Νίκη Χαρτόσια, Ερατώ
Νικολάου, Άννετα Πύλη, Χριστίνα Μιχαήλ, Παύλος Δίπλαρος, Σπύρος
Σφενδουράκης, Περικλής Κλείτου, Δημήτρης Κλείτου, Μαρία Χρίστου,
Χαράλαμπος Αντωνίου, Λούης Χατζηγιωάννου, Carlos Jimenez, Φωτεινή
Πατούρα, Ιωάννης Σάββα*

Εσείς γνωρίζετε για τα ξενικά είδη και πώς αυτά φτάνουν στο νησί μας; Ποιες είναι οι επιπτώσεις στη θαλάσσια βιοποικιλότητα και στα τοπικά θαλάσσια είδη; Ανακαλύψτε μαζί μας τα ξενικά είδη της Κύπρου, μέσω δραστηριοτήτων και παιχνιδιών, ψαρεύοντας θαλάσσια απορρίμματα ή παρατηρώντας θαλάσσιους οργανισμούς στο στερεοσκόπιο. Παράλληλα, μέσα από βιντεοπροβολές μάθετε για τα ξενικά, αλλά και τα τοπικά (αυτόχθονα) είδη και το συνεχή αγώνα τους για προσαρμογή και επιβίωση. Ελάτε να δείτε στο ενυδρείο μας το ξενικό λεοντόψαρο (Lionfish) το οποίο έχει εξαπλωθεί ευρέως στην Κύπρο, τους τρόπους απομάκρυνσής του από τη θάλασσα, αλλά και τις χρήσεις του από τον άνθρωπο.

Figure 25. Description of the information center.

As in 2019, video projections of the RECONNECT project and the marine environment of Cyprus were presented. The RECONNECT poster as well as the Citizens Science poster was placed on the wall so that visitors will see it. Informational material on the Project, the Citizens Science, marine environment of Cyprus, *Posidonia oceanica* and other protected species such as monk seals were given to the visitors regarding the marine environment. Furthermore, the RECONNECT t-shirts, cotton bags, hats, pens and citizen science posters ordered by DBS-UCY were also given to the visitors.

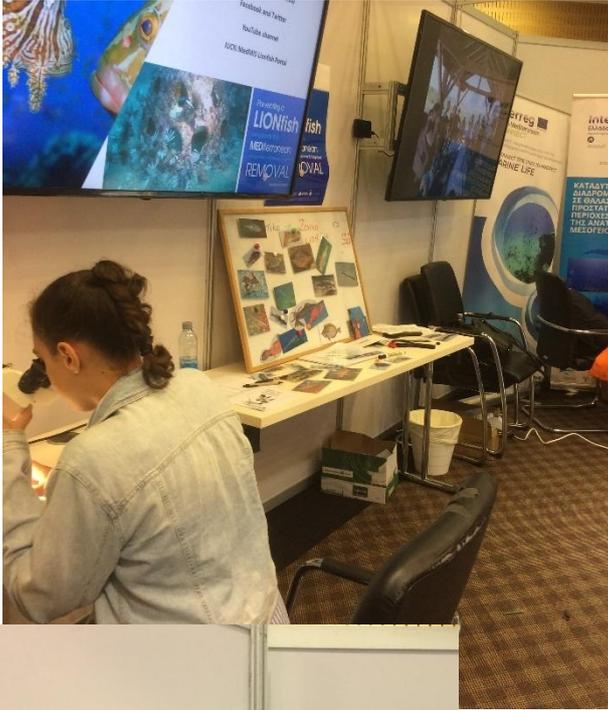




Figure 26. Visitors at the event (Photos Maria Rousou).

2.4 Additional dissemination events

The RECONNECT project was presented in various other events and workshops in Cyprus. Some of the events are presented below:

3 rd Age Environmental Group in Limassol	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place: Limassol 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date: 28 January 2019 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type: Seminar 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisers: 3rd Age Environmental Group 	
Workshop on “Conservation of Biodiversity and Management of the Natura 2000 network – Challenges and Good Practices in Greece and Cyprus”	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place: Nicosia 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date: 7 February 2019 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type: Workshop 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisers: 	
1 st Environmental Festival 2019	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place: Larnaca 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date: 7th of April 2019 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type: Festival 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisers: EF-EM station 	



4th Biodiversity day event

- **Place:** European University of Cyprus, Nicosia
- **Date:** 13th May 2019
- **Type:** Festival
- **Organisers:** European University of Cyprus, Go Green EUC, Inquire in Science and Math Education Research Group, Terra Cypria

από τον κόσμο της:
 Ζωολογίας, Οικολογίας,
 Ανθρώπινης Βιολογίας
 και Μικροβιολογίας

■ Δευτέρα, 13 Μαΐου 2019
 ■ 8:30 π.μ. - 12:30 μ.μ.
 ■ Πολιτιστικό Κέντρο
 Ευρωπαϊκού Πανεπιστημίου Κύπρου

Οι δραστηριότητες είναι οργανωμένες
 σε 2 εξωτερικούς χώρους:
 Περίοδος 1 (8:30-10:30) - Περίοδος 2 (10:30-12:30)
 Μέγιστος αριθμός από άτομα: 50 μαθητές

Οι δημόσιες συμμετοχές
 για περισσότερες πληροφορίες:
 κ. Θέα Σκουλάς, email: t.skoulas@uc.ac.cy



Lecture at the Department of Biological Science of the European University of Cyprus

- **Place:** European University of Cyprus, Nicosia
- **Date:** 13th May 2019
- **Type:** Lecture
- **Organisers:** European University of Cyprus



Zygi Fish Festival

- **Place:** Zygi Fisheries Shelter
- **Date:** 31st August 2019
- **Type:** Festival
- **Organisers:** Community Council of Zygi



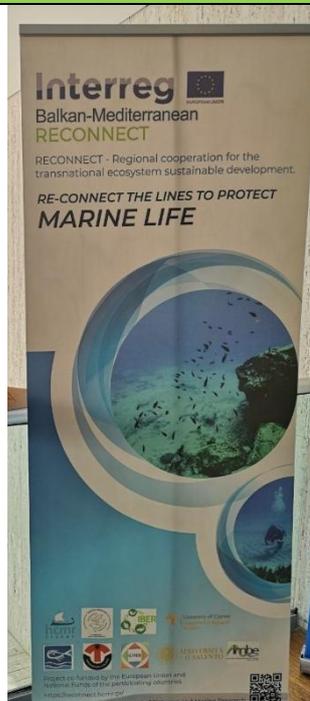
Mediterranean Coastal day

Place: Thalassa museum, Ayia Napa, Cyprus

Date: 25 September 2019

Type: Workshop

Organisers: Department of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and the Environment, and UNEP-MAP



On-line Lecture at the Department of Biological Science of the

European University of Cyprus

Date: 09 April 2020