

CYPRUS ENVIRONMENT FOUNDATION



2-YEAR IMPACT REPORT



The natural beauty of Cyprus has been in my heart since childhood so joining CEF's Steering Committee was an obvious fit. The Foundation will not perform miracles but through selected strategic partnerships with benefactors, local specialists and passionate volunteers, it will make a real difference on the ground. I urge you to join us on this exciting journey.

PETER DRUSSIOTIS, CHAIR, CYPRUS ENVIRONMENT FOUNDATION

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The Cyprus Environment Foundation is a member of Conservation Collective, a global network of local foundations funding effective grass-roots conservation initiatives to protect the environment, restore nature and safeguard against climate change

OUR VISION

The Cyprus Environment Foundation (CEF) aims to protect and enhance the natural beauty, biodiversity and ecosystems of our beloved island of Cyprus.

The CEF was established in 2021 to help the communities of Cyprus become leaders in the transition towards long-term resilience, biodiversity conservation, land regeneration, and general sustainability. We believe environmental sustainability and economic renewal can go hand in hand.

By protecting and growing the natural capital of Cyprus, we strive for a healthy, abundant and resilient natural environment where the local communities can live in prosperity.

OUR STRATEGY

We facilitate our vision and achieve our goals by:

- Raising funds from people and businesses with strong connections to Cyprus to support the best local initiatives working to sustain the diverse natural assets of the island.
- Supporting projects that benefit the local communities and which can be scaled up and replicated across the region.
- Building a strong network of people across Cyprus, united in boosting the work of local environmental champions.



AREAS OF INTEREST



Biodiversity Conservation



Regenerative Land Use



Sustainable Waste Management



Sustainable Resource Management

In our first two years

22

Projects

17

Partners throughout the island

50+

Global donors & supporters

Funding summary

€119,972
for Biodiversity Conservation

€55,120
for Sustainable Waste Management

€6,804
for Regenerative Land Use



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7 Species
Protected



6 Types of
Habitats
Protected



100kg
of Invasive Species
Removed



1,300
Trees Planted

55
Tagged
Animals



30
Tonnes
of Waste
Removed



100kg
CO₂ Saved
per Year



SOCIAL IMPACT EDUCATION



1,300+

Children & Youth Educated

12

Events
Organised

59

Educational
Workshops Run



“

The grant from the CEF, gave our team the opportunity to raise awareness among a large group of young children and educators regarding some crucial marine matters our island faces. Essentially, we all need to realise that by increasing the contact of our children with Cyprus' current marine challenges, leads them to a deeper understanding of how the marine life is essential, how to better comprehend the importance of protecting this planet on which we live and finally, how the ocean and humans are, essentially, inextricably interconnected.

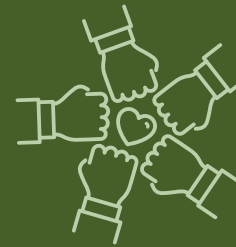
**Rebecca Katsaris - Educational Associate at Enalia
Physis Environmental Research Center**

SOCIAL IMPACT ENGAGEMENT

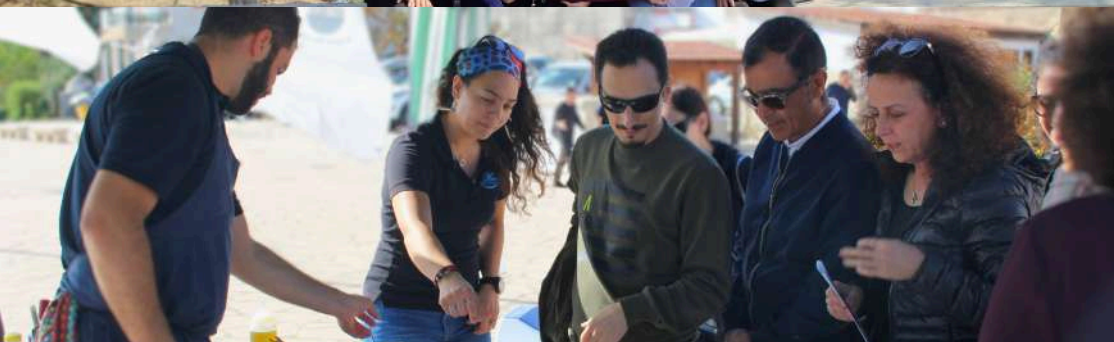
44 Local
Communities



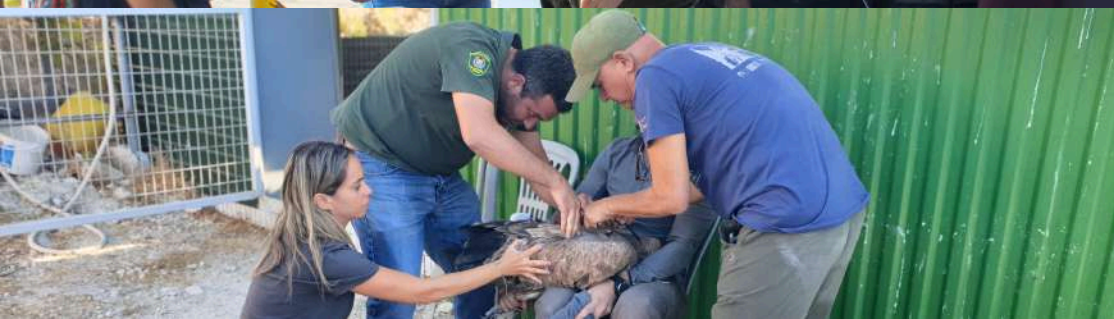
184 Professionals &
Key Stakeholders



3,500+
Volunteers



1,330
Citizens



33 Authority &
Governance
Bodies



OUR PROJECTS

INCREASING MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS THROUGH THE CREATIVE ARTS



ENALIA PHYSIS ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH CENTRE

The intensive and ever-increasing human exploitation of the coastal and marine environments of the island, is quickly degrading important habitats and species of the region. To help raise awareness, the skilled team at *Enalia Physis Environmental Research Center* has been employing **interactive** and

state of the art pedagogical methods,

educating children across Cyprus on the crucial challenges our marine ecosystems are facing and how they can become part of the solution.

In Phase 1, the team conducted **20 experiential workshops** and **two puppetry shows** across Cyprus based on the environmentally focused narratives of Enalia Physis' children's books.

Now, in Phase 2 of the project the team began **training school teachers** in order to arm them with tools and knowledge, so they too can bring this innovative curriculum and learning methods into their classrooms. The teacher's training also includes an **All-Day Conference** so that more educators can get familiar with these interdisciplinary teaching techniques and experience the joys of learning through the creative arts.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The **Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport & Youth** approved all workshops offered by the team, expanding their reach to public education, as well as private.

Additionally the **European Commission** recognized the project for it's contributions under the *'Mission Charter Actions'*. Thanks to the team's support, two public schools in Cyprus have been inducted in the **European Blue School Program**. So far, the team has been invited to **three conferences** to present their project and expand their network and collaborations.



Empowering children to use their skills to raise awareness of endangered animals

The VIE Foundation

Environmental education plays a key role in creating informed and active citizens. Once the children were educated on some of the Cypriot endangered species by local experts, they were given the opportunity to practice their **entrepreneurial skills**, raising funds for conservation by selling **products featuring original art** made by them in class. They then hosted **two podcasts** taking the initiative to discuss and suggest their own solutions.



Classroom for 'Learn Nature in Nature'

Cyprus Wildlife Research Institute

The job of an educator is never simple, but with the right tools and technology, it can get so much easier. Funding for this project was used to purchase teaching equipment including **interactive boards, laptops and projectors**. This facilitated the education of hundreds of young people every year. Learning about ecology and biology at a young age can foster an appreciation for the natural world.



Let's Do it! Cyprus

Together Cyprus

As it's been proven time and time again, we are stronger together. Plastic pollution is a crucial issue in Cyprus, with an added pressure due to the increasing yearly influx of tourists on the island. With the help of **18,000 volunteers**, of which 13,000 were students, the team led a successful clean up campaign that resulted in **78 tons of mixed trash** and **58 tons of PMD** being removed from Cyprus' precious natural environment.



Bring your Cup

Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative

Morning coffee is a daily ritual in most offices, colleges and universities in Cyprus. Single use plastic coffee cups are one of the top waste items found on Cyprus' beaches. Instead, drinks can be served in cups provided by the customer, significantly reducing waste generated by the industry. This project aims to encourage local businesses and the public to **use reusable cups** through prizes and a point collection scheme.



PLASTIC FREE BEACH INITIATIVE

Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative

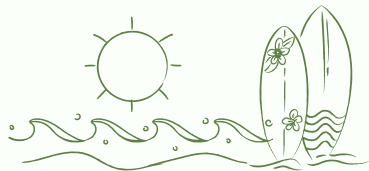


Plastics make up 95% of sea and beach waste across the Mediterranean. In Cyprus, waste production increases by 40% in the summer months due to tourism; and around 80% of rubbish collected on beaches comprise of plastics. This project is implementing solutions that aim to shift behavioral patterns, and raise awareness on the threats and solution for sustainable waste management.

CEF is supporting the concept of 'Plastic Free Beaches' – an initiative of the project *'Keep our Sand and Sea Plastic Free'* implemented by the Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative and the TUI Care Foundation. The project's goal is the reduction of plastic pollution on the island, primarily targeting the tourism industry.

Through collaborative efforts with municipalities, beaches are transformed and certified as 'Plastic Free'. Cold, filtered water fountains are provided for the public for free, encouraging beach goers to bring their own refillable water bottles. Additionally, smoking areas are established with ash trays and an art work created by a local school utilizing collected beach waste, is featured on the beach. Local nearby businesses are encouraged to take part in the solution by replacing plastic bottles with filtered water served on tables and take measures to reduce the overall use of single use plastic on their premises.

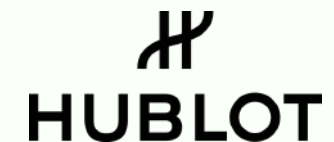
The project has received three grants from CEF to implement a range of activities which enhance and promote the project's concept including: (i) the creation of a high-impact **branding materials and a guidelines manual** to be used by all certified 'Plastic Free Beaches', (ii) the **establishment of the 5th 'Plastic Free Beach'** at Ayios Tychonas municipality and (iii) raising awareness through **celebratory events** on the beaches and **promotional material and educational workshops** engaging with the local communities and schools.



3 GRANTS WITH UNDENIABLE IMPACT!



Phase 2 of this project has been supported by Depeche Mode and Hublot through the Memento Mori Tour charity partnership!



GREENING CYPRUS IN THE FIRE-AFFECTED AREAS

Laona Foundation



To demonstrate how to accelerate the restoration of recently burnt areas, *Laona Foundation* collaborated with *300,000 Trees in Limassol*, with support from CEF. This project emphasised the importance of soil restoration prior to replanting efforts. The project took place in Eptagonia, where five **drywall terrace workshops** were organized, training 38 volunteers in this traditional earth and water management technique. Together, they **restored more than 150 metres** of degraded drywall terrace, which help prevent soil erosion and flooding in the fire-affected plot.

Additionally, 300 native trees and shrubs were planted with the help of 200 volunteers, to fast-track nature's recovery. This project **engaged the local community and surrounding schools**, who were encouraged to participate in the restoration and monitoring of the area, whilst learning the significance of the applied techniques in accelerating nature's gradual recovery.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT WITH LIFE WITH VULTURES

BirdLife Cyprus



Griffon Vultures provide unique ecosystem services that are crucial for the healthy functioning of our ecosystems. While they were abundant in the first half of the twentieth century, with up to 140 individuals observed at a single carcass, in the latter half of the twentieth century, frequent poisoning incidents and decreased food availability caused a rapid and sustained population decline to **14 individuals in 2005**.

By collaborating with Cypriot authorities, communities and other local and international partners, the project raises awareness of the threats to Griffon Vultures. Individuals have been monitored and surveyed using GPS tags, with efforts to protect the birds and wider countryside from poisoning, harmful to both wildlife and humans.

Through a first grant, CEF supported the **tagging and monitoring** of local vultures. The projects' awareness raising activities were reinforced through a second grant where local **shepherds have been incentivized to become stewards and protectors** of this locally endangered species. In addition, crucial **legal work** has been funded that will enable the prosecution of wildlife crime violators.



WINNER
in 2023 Collective Awards
in the category:

'Protecting, Preserving and Regenerating Natural Habitats'



FISH THE ALIEN



Marine and Environmental Research (MER) Lab

Biological pollution ranks as the third greatest threat to marine biodiversity and is responsible for the loss of local biodiversity and ecosystem services. Among marine ecosystems, the Eastern Mediterranean Sea underwent the most intense and exceptionally rapid changes globally due to climatic change and other anthropogenic drivers. Other than ecological consequences, Invasive Alien Species (IAS) have an economic effect in local communities, with impacts on commercial fisheries and tourism, as some of the species are venomous and poisonous. In addition, non-indigenous species have low commercial value and are usually discarded by fishers.

This thrilling project used an innovative market-based solution to address this problem. By engaging chefs, fishers and the wider public, the project team provided education on the ecological and gastronomic benefits of removing these species from our seas and placing them on our plates.

The team organized **two expeditions with free divers**, targeting the removal of invasive species from the sea, followed by a **cooking seminar** which aimed to educate professional chefs on the handling and cooking of such species. A **gastronomy event** was also organized, raising awareness on the issue and giving the general public the chance to taste delicious dishes exclusively prepared with IAS.

Educational and dissemination material was produced featuring IAS recipes and Citizen Science tools which participants can use to report IAS observations, thereby raising awareness and promoting the species' consumption. Recipes created throughout this project (in Greek and English) are free to use and are featured on the project's page on our website.



Scientific engagement of fishers in guitarfish conservation

Marine Environmental Research (MER) Lab

Costal development and overfishing have been reducing Guitarfish numbers especially in the northern Mediterranean. Populations seem to persist in the south, including the region of Cyprus. **Using a citizen science approach** this project collects data on the species and takes actions to protect it. This project **trains local fishers** on the harmless release of species and how to record their sightings.



Monitoring & assisted recruitment of the Critically Endangered *Pinna nobilis*

Enalia Physis Environmental Research Centre

Pinna nobilis is the largest endemic bivalve found in the Mediterranean Sea. Due to the dramatic population reduction, *P. nobilis* was listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN's Red List in 2019. With the help of larval collectors and SCUBA diving surveys, the project team attempted to locate, collect larva and propagate the species. **Unfortunately no *P. nobilis* larva was identified on the coast of Cyprus.**

Phylogenetic characterization of indigenous Cyprus Cattle

Eratosthenis Center of Excellence

The indigenous Cyprus Cattle is the only cattle breed adapted to the harsh local environmental conditions. It is also a species threatened by extinction. The aim of this project was to study the diversity, population structure and genetic characterization of the animals that still exist on the island. **Blood samples were collected, their genetic material was analysed, and animals of the island were mapped.**



BonBonTrack: Identifying key habitats of Bonelli's eagle to keep them on track

Kuşkor: The Society for the Protection of Birds and Nature

The Bonelli's Eagle is the only remaining eagle species that breeds in Cyprus. One of its preferred breeding and hunting habitats are Pentadaktylos (Beşparmak) mountains, which as of yet, are not protected under the Special Environmental Protected Areas network. This project **used GPS tags to track newborn eagles** and collect information on their use of the area leading to lobbying efforts for their protection.

ALL-ISLAND WETLAND MONITORING



Kuşkor: The Society for the Protection of Birds and Nature & BirdLife Cyprus

Cyprus has 373 wetlands, of which 58 are natural and 315 are artificial. This bicommunal project lead by Kuşkor and BirdLife Cyprus, **established a Cyprus-wide wetland monitoring scheme**. Through a workshop which was open to the public, the project team raised awareness on the purpose and importance of regular wetland monitoring, and **identified keen volunteers** to take up the challenge. Following that, they conducted **training sessions** in local wetlands and **provided the necessary optical equipment** to enable consistent and high quality data collection for waterbird monitoring and conservation. With this data, bird population trends can be calculated and threats can be identified before they lead to disaster. In addition, monthly visits to wetlands enable immediate action against threats such as illegal construction, dumping of waste and unsolicited draining of wetlands.

30 Wetlands monitored monthly in the North of Cyprus

10  Volunteers trained and recruited



HIGHLY COMMENDED
in 2024 Collective Awards
in the category:
'Restoring Natural Habitats'

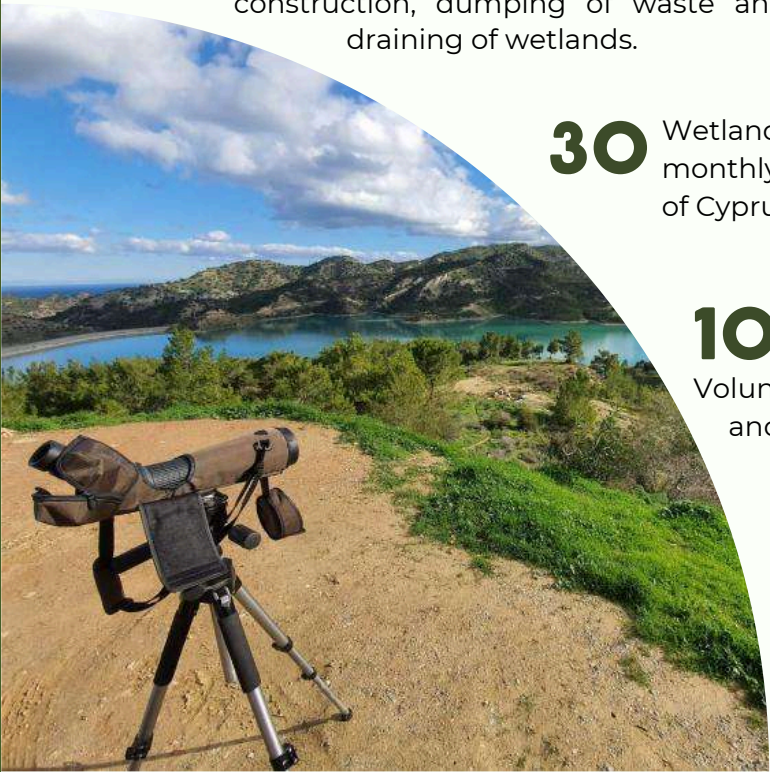


Key Achievement

Data collected led to the identification of an important wetland and actions were taken to protect it.



The local municipality has been ordered to move waste from the area to an official waste management site and stop using the wetland as a dump site.





Glass Room

Karşıyaka Culture and Arts Association

In rural areas, collection and redistribution of used glass can be costly and contributes to further carbon emissions. Vasilia (Karşıyaka) community decided to take matters in their own hands and upcycle their glass, by crushing it into sand and distributing it for use in local construction businesses. This grant enabled the **installation of solar panels**, allowing the community to continue their upcycling operations with a **reduced carbon footprint**.



Combating Desertification in Cyprus through Composting

AKTI Project and Research Centre

Cyprus is one of the countries most severely impacted by desertification. Caused both by climatic conditions and human activities, this phenomenon quickly leads to the deterioration of soil health with consequences for growing food. Engaging with the local communities, farmers and authorities, this project **developed a road map** that proposes the **use of agricultural green waste for the production of locally used compost**.



The search for the lost freshwater blenny fish of Cyprus

Freshwater Life Project

Freshwater systems are crucial ecosystems that are under constant pressure throughout the world. The Cyprus Blenny fish is a one of the many native species that have disappeared from our rivers due to powerful chemical pesticides applied in the previous years and the presence of invasive species. This project **surveyed rivers across Cyprus in search of eDNA data on the species**. So far, no signs of the Blenny fish were found, but the effort is not over yet.



Restoration and conservation of Amathos river

Freshwater Life Project

Amongst pressures threatening the island's freshwater systems is the obstruction of natural flow through dams, an increase in the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers, unsustainable development, and wildfires. The aim of this project was to protect and restore part of Amathos river, one of the largest riparian systems on the island. Project activity included a **river clean-up**, water testing, **planting over 1000 trees** in its fire-affected banks and placing **four educational signs** along key river sites.

OUR TEAM

CEF's local team consists of the local **Executive Director** and the **Operations Manager** in charge of day-to-day management and coordination on the ground, assisted by scientific and technical advisors and the Steering Committee.



Sofia Matsi
Executive Director



Michaelangelo Pontikis
Operations Manager

Steering Committee



Peter Drousiotis
(Chair)



Miria Kyprianou



Ara Khederian



Kyriacos Kyriltsias



Ben Goldsmith



Jade Brudenell



Demetris Lemesianos



Anna Pittalis



Maria Mavridou

Advisory Board

- Andreas Angeli** - Circular economy, Sustainable mobility
- Athanasia Mandoulaki** - Regenerative agroecosystems
- Dr Brendan Godley** - Marine biology and conservation
- Dr Claire Papazoglou** - Ornithology, Sustainability policy
- Dr Constantinos Kounnamas** - Plant ecology and conservation
- Dr Dimitrios Sarris** - Dendroecology, Agroforestry
- Evagoras Isaïas** - Marine biology, Blue economy
- Dr Maïa Fourt** - Marine biology and ecology
- Dr Michael Loizides** - Circular Economy, Sustainable waste management
- Dr Nestor Fylaktos** - Energy strategies and modelling
- Dr Sam Jones** - Ornithology, Tropical Montaigne Ecology
- Dr Savvas Zotos** - Herpetology, Ecology and conservation
- Dr Vasilis Litskas** - Sustainable and organic farming

“

Everywhere you look there are brilliant, passionate people working to create positive environmental change. Small amounts of funding, strategically directed, can supercharge this work.

BEN GOLDSMITH, CO-FOUNDER & STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBER, CYPRUS ENVIRONMENT FOUNDATION

OUR SUPPORTERS



**STELIO
STEPHANOU
TRUST**



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Shukuroglou**



**Island Oil
Holdings**



Stelios
STELIOS PHILANTHROPIC
FOUNDATION
WWW.STELIOS.ORG

DeLeMaMcCann

**Future
Directions
Foundation**



WHAT'S NEXT

Our priority is to increase the amount of funding available for local, tangible, nature-based solutions by inspiring more people and organisations to get involved.

We aim to encourage more grassroots regenerative and conservation projects to start-up or scale-up, by providing mentoring, expertise, connections, and vital financial support.

Your support would enable us to seed even more nature-based solutions; while showcasing project successes that ignite hope and wider action, and accelerate systemic change.

Support us with a donation!

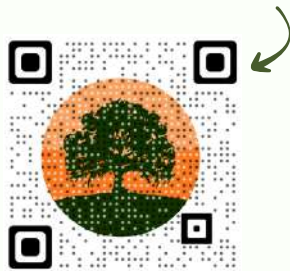


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- Pages 9 (bottom left), 14** - A. M. Hadjigavriel
- Page 9 (bottom right)** - Herpetological Society of Cyprus
- Pages 9 (top left), 10, 13, 23 (right)** - Enalia Physis
- Pages 11 (1st & 3rd), 22, 23 (left)** - Marine Environmental Research Lab
- Pages 11 (2nd), 16 (right)** - Together Cyprus
- Page 11 (4th)** - Sofia Matsi
- Page 15 (right)** - The VIE Foundation
- Page 15 (left)** - Cyprus Wildlife Research Institute
- Pages 16 (left), 18** - Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative
- Page 18 (bottom left)** - Andrey & Julia Dashin's Foundation
- Page 20** - Silvio Augusto Rusmigo
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THANK YOU

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Learn more!



www.cyprusenvironment.org