

Hellenic Republic



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PRESS RELEASE

**The Agricultural University of Athens has co-signed a Memorandum of Understanding on
the protection of the sea and fishery.**

On Monday, September 26 2022, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed on Amorgos Island, amongst the Ministry of Rural Development and Food, the Secretary General of the Aegean and Island Policy, the Municipality of Amorgos, the Professional Fishing Association of Amorgos, the Cyclades Preservation Fund (CPF), the Blue Marine Foundation (BMF) and the Agricultural University of Athens. The Vice Rector of the Agricultural University of Athens and Professor of the Department of Crop Science, of the School of Plant Sciences, Professor Iordanis Chatzipavlidis has represented the Agricultural University of Athens, along with the Assistant Professor of the Department of Animal Science, of the School of Animal Biosciences, Mr. Stefanos Kalogirou.

The particular Memorandum of Understanding has been the product of close collaboration of the contracting parties, thereby sealing the strong will of the State, the local government, the academic community, the environmental organizations and institutions as well, with a view to supporting in practice the fishermen of Amorgos Island and the Amorgorama initiative ^[1]. The planning and implementation of the necessary scientific and institutional procedures will contribute to the creation of protected fishing areas on Amorgos Island.

[1] About AMORGORAMA [here](#)

The fishery research undertaken by the Scientific Coordinator and Manager of the Project, namely the Assistant Professor, Mr. Stefanos Kalogirou, aims at protecting the marine environment and the fishing opportunities through the quantitative and qualitative assessment of the distribution and abundance of fish species into the vital *Posidonia oceanica*, other coastal habitats in three areas included as well, having been proposed by the fishermen of Amorgos. The protection of these habitats, inasmuch that of other areas, acting as fish and crustacean nurseries (e.g. lobsters), or also as their reproductive fields, will be the main focus of this research study, which is expected to be completed within a year. In addition, a study will be elaborated, with reference to the spread of invasive alien species (e.g. *Lagocephalus sceleratus*), a very important subject that has special appeal to both fishermen and the scientific community, too. Furthermore, a significant object of study will be the use of habitats created, as a result of such species impact.

The initiative of the fishermen of Amorgos sets one of the few examples of the Mediterranean wherein management begins from collegiality and cooperation of competent bodies, having the Memorandum of Understanding as the practical contribution to these principles. The target of this collective attempt involves the protection of the fishing opportunities of the small coastal fishermen, by means of the demarcation of areas under protection and limitation of fishing effort. The study, commenced on Sunday, September 18 2022, is co-financed by two important Institutions: The Blue Marine Foundation ^[2] and the Cyclades Preservation Fund, pursuing all the goals of the Common Fisheries Policy and Framework Directives upon the environmental conservation.

^[2] [Blue Marine Foundation](#), headquartered in United Kingdom, aims at restoring the ocean health, tackling overfishing, one of the greatest environmental issues all over the world. It does business worldwide regarding the protection of large sea areas, besides restoring marine biodiversity. Within the next decade, Blue Marine's objective consists of the protection of at least 30% of the ocean, inasmuch the sustainable management in the remaining 70% of the marine environment.