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Thessaloniki, 23 May 2018

Press Release

**The EU Natura 2000 Day and European Maritime Days
were celebrated in Greece and on Lemnos island (GR)
by the European Project North East Meltemi - The breath of Archipelagos.**

“Surf the *Blue*: Experience the NE Aegean Archipelagos”

EU Natura 2000 Day and **European Maritime Days** were celebrated by the European Project ‘**North East Meltemi – The breath of Archipelagos’ (MELTEMI)** on the island of Lemnos in Greece by interfering a wind of change in everyday life of islanders through the ‘**Green & Blue Days 2018**’ (19-21/05/2018). By a series of experiential and participatory activities, MELTEMI enhanced the **green** and **blue** awareness and knowledge of the locals and the student community on the island, as well as of the 25 students of the School of Journalism and Mass Communications of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (GR) that were part of the MELTEMI’s team.

The **blue** and **green** experience began with a guided eco-road trip. The ‘**Trace your Eco**’ guides (specialists in experiential eco-tours and trekking) traveled with MELTEMI team and informed the team members about the biodiversity of the area, the interchanges of nature and maritime, the land and sea-scapes, the wetlands and the **green** and **blue** protected areas of NATURA 2000, while driving through Central and East Macedonia of Greece from the city of Thessaloniki, around the lakes of Volvi and Koronia, to the maritime area of Keramoti and the Kavala Port, where the team boarded the ship to Lemnos island.

On Lemnos island (GR), the MELTEMI team met young people engaged in water sports and participated all-together in outdoor activities (cycling). The MELTEMI team also interacted with representatives of the Nautical Club of Lemnos and of the Local Government and was impressed by their passion for nautical sports as well as the means and the ways they face their difficulties to pursue and retain active the nautical activity on the coastal areas and island regions.

The students of the School of Journalism and Mass Communications took some Kite and Windsurfing beginner lessons by the instructors of the **Surf Club Keros** (GR) (**MELTEMI’s partner**), which made them feel excited and brought them close to the aquatic, water and sporting element. The **blue** experience was enhanced through the experiential guided tour to the water and the nautical world, the nautical culture and heritage and the maritime communities of sponge and fishing people in the **Museum of Maritime Tradition and Sponge – Fishing** in Nea Koutali village in Lemnos island (GR).

The acquaintance with the **Photography Group of Lemnos** and the cultural visit in the historical Dimitriadios School and the photography exhibition of the Group with the support of the athletic club of «**lfestia**», gave that extra added value to the search of the cultural activity of the Islanders.

Important part of the whole action was the voluntary beach cleanup of Keros beach on the east side of Lemnos island (GR) on the celebration of the EU NATURA 2000 day, together with the students of the **Elementary School of**

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Kontopouli village, where all participants were informed about waste issues, their collection, sorting, and recycling. More than 60 kilos of waste were gathered from the participants and were sent to the waste disposal sites of the island with the collaboration of the local Port Authorities.

With the contribution of 'Nature Traveler' (an Environmentalist and certified interpretative guide), the MELTEMI team visited the heart of the NATURA 2000 area in the Keros region of Lemnos island (GR) and was informed about the specificities of the Limnian natural and maritime, land and sea-scapes by crossing saltwater-salt marshes, sand dunes, and the coastal zone where they explored the diversity of the biotopes, posidonia meadows and the microcosm of flora with special binocular microscopes.

The **blue and green** experience was completed with an eno-gastronomic experience that took place in the contemporary but traditional 'home of flavors' spot in Moudros village in Lemnos island (GR). Here the MELTEMI team had a culinary experience with local tastes and products of Protected Designation of Origin and of Protected Geographical Indication (dairy and cheese products and local wines), with the support of 'Taste Lemnos' and with some offerings by Chrysafi ABEE.

Together with us in this blue and green experience we had our, MELTEMI's, local partners, which we warmly thank for their support:



Elementary School of Kontopouli Lemnos

More info about 'MELTEMI':

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