
PRESS RELEASE

Summer University on Biosphere Reserves and Sustainable Development.

The Summer University, held from July 8 to July 15, 2018, in the region of Southeastern Peloponnese (Parnon - Maleas - Monemvasia) brought together scientists from 15 European and Mediterranean countries. A total of more than 50 people, postgraduate students, young researchers and park managers, etc. had the opportunity for a week to exchange views and experiences from their countries, tour the region, and interact with residents, especially producers and entrepreneurs, to promote the idea of declaring the area as a Biosphere Reserve.

What are Biosphere Reserves? Simply put, these are regions that follow innovative sustainable development approaches based on the three-fold Man-Environment-Sustainable Development. Biosphere reserves are not just protected areas but combine the protection of natural and man-made elements with human presence and economic and social development. Today there are more than 650 such areas in the world, recognized by the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Program, while Greece has already recognized the areas of Olympus and Samaria.

The Summer University was held in preparation of the region's candidacy to join the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The work focused on issues of management, education, alternative tourism and the promotion of local products. The intensive weekly program included theoretical presentations, targeted visits, and interviews with the locals. Moreover participants worked in groups to shape their proposals for the region, based on their own personal experiences. The results of the Summer University, which were presented at a public event, show that the area of Parnon with its rich history, unique biodiversity, architecture, landscapes, culture and excellent local products not only meets the requirements integration but that this integration can act as a catalyst and a driving force for the sustainable development of the local community.

It is noted that this was the fourth in a series of Summer Universities that took place in Amfissa (2014), Samothraki (2016) and Sardinia (2017). For the organization many experts from UNESCO (Venice Office), the Mediterranean Information Office (MIO-ECSDE), Regional Development Company of Paronias, OIKOM, the Management Body PMMM, the UNESCO Chair for Sustainable Development of the University of Athens, collaborated for many months while the municipalities of the area, embraced the project from the start.

More information, presentations and results: www.medies.net

The Summer School was organized and supported by:



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for Science and Culture
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The UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe

www.unesco.org/new/en/venice



The Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (www.mio-ecsde.org) through its education initiative MEDIES (www.medies.net).



OIKOM Environmental Studies Ltd

<http://www.oikom.gr/en>



The Regional Development Company of Parnonas (PARNONAS S.A.) www.parnonas.gr/en/



MANAGEMENT BODY
PARNON MOUSTOS
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Management Body of Parnon, Moustos, Mainalon and Monemvasia www.fdparnonas.gr



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The Greek National Committee of Man and the Biosphere Program of UNESCO



The UNESCO Chair and Network on Sustainable Development Management and Education in the Mediterranean of the University of Athens

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