

**Plastic Busters MPAs Final Conference
Athens, 12-13 April 2022**



**The Plastic Busters MPAs local experiences on marine litter
prevention and mitigation at Zakynthos MPA**

Konstantinos Moschopoulos, National Marine Park of Zakynthos



National Marine Park of Zakynthos

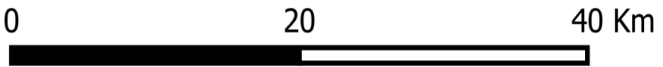


Marine area: 89 km² Terrestrial area: 14.2 km²

Facts Priority species and habitats 92/43/EU: sea turtles, monk seal, seabirds, cetaceans, Posidonia beds

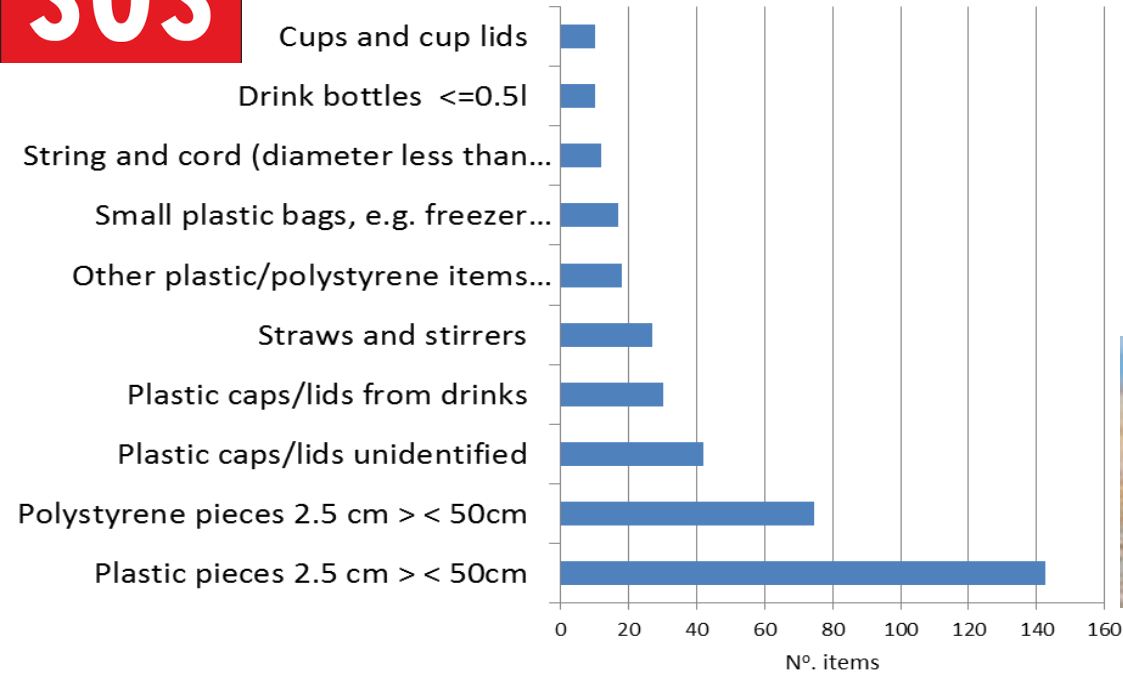
+15 Endangered or protected species / critical habitats for reproduction of endangered species at Mediterranean level

High recreational and tourism pressure





MPA beach top 10 items



- 95.4% → artificial polymer materials
- 23% → SUPs
- >7000 cigarette buds/year (6 nesting beaches)
- Majority of litter found related to tourism and recreational activities



SUPS related to coffee cups and straws

The Plastic Busters MPAs marine litter prevention and mitigation actions – Two measures selected to be piloted



Pilot Action 1: Promoting SUPs free beaches

Assess the willingness of tourism and recreation related businesses to transform themselves

Provide reusable alternatives to SUPs

Engage with local communities and assess their perceptions on the issue of SUPs.

Pilot Action 2: Cigarette butts free beaches

Beach litter surveys & cleanup actions

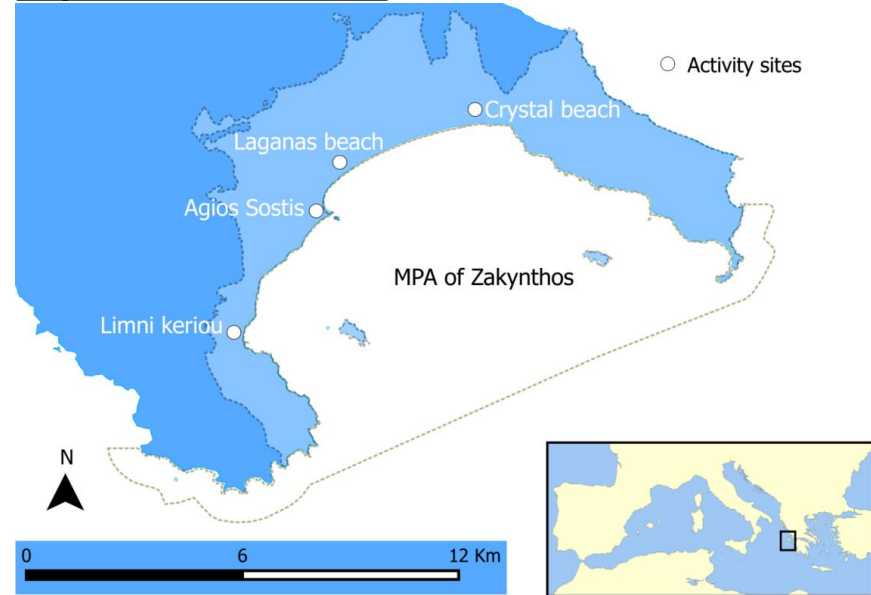
Promoting sustainable practices for cigarette butts

Partners

National Marine Park of Zakynthos
University of the Aegean
MIO-ECSDE



Implementation sites



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Pilot Action 1: Promoting SUPs free beaches

Establishing a reusable cup delivery system for bars

- 1500 reusable cups made primarily of bamboo fiber with a silicone lid and 2000 packs of paper straws (20000 straws) were purchased
- All items distributed via the “Crystal Beach” Hotel and Bar
- Memorandum of Understanding (*MoU*) signed between the owner of this enterprise and the NMPZ Management Agency
- Distribution of cups and straws at no charge for customers.

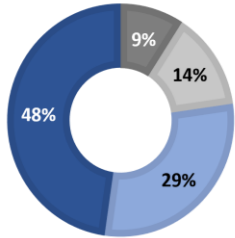


Pilot Action 1: Promoting SUPs free beaches

Surveys targeting touristic businesses, local communities and tourists for assessing their perceptions on SUPs - Results

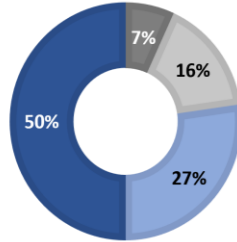
Tourism businesses

how important is mitigation of "plastic overconsumption" for local community and your business?



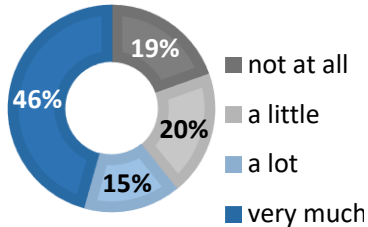
■ not at all ■ a little ■ a lot ■ very much

how confident you are that SUPs mitigation will have a positive effect on clients perception for your business?



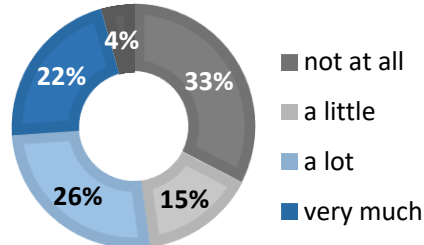
■ not at all ■ a little ■ a lot ■ very much

Problem on plastic and SUPs mitigation: "bad" habits of customers



■ not at all
■ a little
■ a lot
■ very much

Problem on plastic and SUPs mitigation: staff not trained on the best practices



■ not at all
■ a little
■ a lot
■ very much

Local community and tourists

- Only 62% were aware of the SUPs related directive
- The absence or sparseness of proper waste disposal facilities is the determinant factor of the presence of litter on the beaches of the area
- 90% expressed the willingness to participate in relevant actions
- Great confusion of the wider public regarding optimum solutions and alternatives to SUPs; biodegradable and oxo-degradable plastics

Pilot Action 2: Cigarette-butt free beaches

Survey to assess the attitudes of beach visitors, beach litter surveys, cleanup actions & promotion of sustainable practices for cigarette butts

Survey to assess the attitudes of beach visitors towards the discarding of cigarette butts in the park

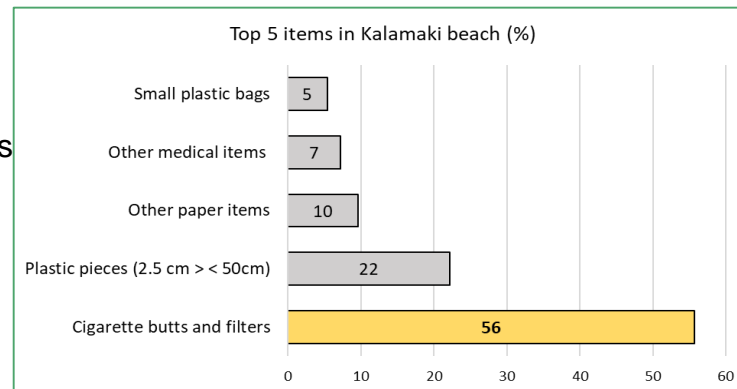
- Implemented at Kalamaki beach, Daphni beach and Agios Sostis beach
- Gathering of cigarette butts was the only recorded behaviour among beach users

Beach litter surveys

- Implemented at Kalamaki Beach, Vrontonero beach and Keri beach
- Cigarette butts amounted to 56% of the total items recorded
- Abundance appears to be high only in the summer period

Promoting sustainable practices for cigarette butts

- 2,000 reusable paper ashtrays were purchased
- Distributed by the “Crystal Beach” Hotel and Bar to its customers and to visitors of Kalamaki Beach
- An awareness raising campaign was developed
- Signs with the key message "Cigarette-butt and single use plastic free beaches" placed in key areas of the Park (Port of Agios Sostis, beach of Laganas, beach of Keri)



The Plastic Busters MPAs marine litter prevention and mitigation actions



What we succeeded?

- We supervised and monitored the cups and straws distribution to ensure the proper implementation of the action, identify malfunctions and come up with the proper formula in order to replicate the action
- Most customers chose to refill their reusable cup instead of using a SUP cup and straw.
- The quantity of SUPs (cups and straws) was significantly reduced on the beaches.
- Cigarette butts majorly reduced

The SUPs-free beach bars practice will be an additional criterion to be integrated in the eco-labelling of local tourism businesses



Adoption of regulations battling plastic litter in the management plan of the MPA



Challenges and lessons learned

- Additional waste bins with larger storage capacity, increase frequency of waste collection
- tourism and recreation businesses: waste prevention & re-use are the most preferred options, followed by recycling or composting
- increase awareness of beach users on the SUPs issue
- Need for training of business staff to implement targeted measures
- Strengthen awareness of beach users on the effects of cigarette butts' pollution (education for sustainable development programs and public participation activities)
- Need for supplementary portable ashtrays production and/or fixed ashtrays settlements on the beaches
- Continue to monitoring marine litter on the long run



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Thank you!

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