**Hellenic Republic**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Participation of the Agricultural University of Athens in the International Conference “OUR OCEAN CONFERENCE” 2024.**

The Agricultural University of Athens has taken part in the International Conference “OUR OCEAN CONFERENCE” (OOC) 2024, which was held at the premises of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center, from Monday until Wednesday April 15-17 2024, respectively. At the outset of the Conference on Monday, April 15 2024 at a special event organized, the Study elaborated by the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA), was featured on behalf of Mr. Stefanos Kalogirou, Assistant Professor, who is the Scientific Coordinator of the pertinent Project. The event had been scheduled by the Cyclades Preservation Fund (CPF), in collaboration with Blue Marine Foundation, the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA) and the Theraic Sea, entitled: “Establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Fisheries Restriction Areas (FRAs) with the initiative of the local communities involved.”

It is worth mentioning that the Assistant Professor, Mr. Stefanos Kalogirou, has scientifically substantiated the sustainability of Fisheries and the protection of fisheries stocks in the coastal zone to the perimeter of Amorgos Island. In particular, the fishermen’s not partaking in any fisheries activity, throughout the months of April and May over the specific areas, is deemed necessary, with a view to achieving a balance in the marine ecosystem, since the reproductive cycle of fish has been strongly disturbed for decades, while fish populations have been dramatically reduced, too. The aforementioned Study falls within the framework of AMORGORAMA Program, launched on the initiative of the Professional Association of Fishermen of the Island of Amorgos.

The Minister of Rural Development and Food, Mr. Eleftherios Avgenakis, has participated as an Honoured Guest at the International Conference “OUR OCEAN CONFERENCE” (OOC) 2024, defining throughout his speech, the AMORGORAMA Project as a perfect example of the Greek Rural Economy, inasmuch his announcing that the findings of the Study of the Agricultural University of Athens have been forwarded to the competent Authorities, considering the potential ways of enabling the work to progress with the support of the State. Furthermore, the whole of the Political Leadership of the Ministry of Rural Development and Food has been present at the specific event, besides the pertinent Directorates in considerable attendance of their Executives. On top of that, a number of Delegates from Academic and Research Institutions, as well as Representatives from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), along with National and Foreign Researchers, Delegations from Financial Institutions and Journalists, have also taken part.

At the central event of the International Conference “OUR OCEAN CONFERENCE” on the Enhancement of Sustainable Fisheries, which took place on Wednesday, April 17 2024, the Minister of Rural Development and Food, Mr. Eleftherios Avgenakis referred to AMORGORAMA Project, as “ another commitment of the Government”, recognizing and welcoming both the example and the proposals set by the Fishers, not only as “an original idea that should act as a model for all of the islands”, but also as “a perfect example of Agricultural Economy, fostering cooperativeness and solidarity among groups of the local society, whereas it promotes at the same time, a sustainable production model with full respect for the environment”.

It is additionally noticeable that the International Conference “OUR OCEAN CONFERENCE” (OOC) has gradually developed into a general Forum for dialogue and exchange of views, which gathers a diverse audience, consisting of Governments, Intergovernmental Organizations, Academics, Representatives of Private Sector Companies and Non-Governmental Organizations that share a common vision for the protection of the oceans and take active steps in order to uphold this vision.

For more information, anyone interested, may enter into the following link:

[OUR OCEAN CONFERENCE 2024](https://www.ourocean2024.gov.gr/?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjw57exBhAsEiwAaIxaZrDZIPQcSeHfAAcf9jvzIxRzAFiBZC3zgOBn1CJYY8uDrZjV-rFAExoCnAMQAvD_BwE)