

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Scientists offer recommendations to policymakers on how to protect our seas

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Must we take action against marine degradation? Is marine protection really a good social investment? Shall we invest in Marine Protected Areas? Policymakers want to protect our seas, but they also need to factor in the economic aspects of these measures. Scientists and socio-economists are working together, under the PERSEUS Project, to help provide policymakers with key insights and recommendations for marine and maritime sustainable growth.

‘PERSEUS’ which stands for ‘Policy-oriented marine Environmental Research in the Southern European Seas’ and is a large-scale research project funded by the European Commission’s 7th Framework Research Programme (FP7). The PERSEUS Project Co-ordinator, Dr. Evangelos Papathanassiou, explains that “The PERSEUS research project is a first of its kind in that it specifically targets its results for policymakers, giving them a complete set of tools for designing an effective and innovative evidence-based marine governance framework, specifically tailored for the Mediterranean and Black Seas.” The PERSEUS project brings together over 300 scientists from 53 partner organisations in 21 countries.

The Maltese partner of the PERSEUS project is the International Ocean Institute - Malta Operational Centre (IOI-MOC) at the University of Malta. Malta reaps many benefits from the sea, but it also has a larger ‘portion of the sea’ to protect compared to its land mass - for example, its territorial waters (12nm) occupy a spatial area 14 times greater than the land mass of the Maltese Islands themselves. According to Dr. Alan Deidun from the IOI-MOC, “Malta’s compliance with a number of onerous EU Directives, namely the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, places on the island state a considerable burden on its limited resources. Participation in a prestigious project like PERSEUS will bring much needed foresight in the field of marine management and policy-making to the Maltese Islands.”

As part of the European Maritime Day activities in Malta this week, the PERSEUS Project organised a workshop for local marine stakeholders raising awareness on marine environment issues. The key findings of PERSEUS to date were further promoted at its exhibition stand and through a presentation to international stakeholders.

Visit the PERSEUS Website [www.perseus-net.eu](http://www.perseus-net.eu) for the latest information on the PERSEUS project's activities, findings and useful tools. For more information on PERSEUS, please contact:

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