Darwin Plus Local
Final Report Template

We recommend preparing your project's final report in this Word template and collecting all of the supporting files/evidence that you will need to submit with this in advance. You may then copy and paste your answers into the online form, and upload the supporting files, images, and evidence, and submit at: https://bcfs.flexigrant.com/. Please note reports will only be accepted via the Flexi-Grant Portal. Any reports received on the Word form via email will be rejected.

We recommend that you also refer to your original project application form while completing this report, to remind you of your original goals as stated in your original project application.

It is important that every project completes the 'essential' sections (1, 2, 3 and 7). While the remaining sections (4 to 6) are optional, it is highly encouraged and useful for you to complete all sections (if you have appropriate/relevant contributions to them) because it helps demonstrate to funders how your project has contributed to the portfolio. Essential sections are shown in blue text. Optional sections are shown in black text.

If you have any questions at all, please contact us at: BCF-Reports@niras.com including your project ref in the subject line.

The report submission deadline is no later than **one** month after the agreed end date of your project. In addition, please be aware that the approval of the final payment/claim for your project is dependent on the completion and acceptance of this final report.

Section 1: Darwin Plus Local Project Information

Project reference number (as provided in your award letter)	DPL00075
Project title	This is automatically completed from the project application form – no need to complete here. **Mesophos" - Exploring the Mesophotic Zone of Cyprus UKOTs**
Overseas Territory(ies)	Sovereign Base Areas of Akrotiri and Dhekelia (on Cyprus)
Lead organisation or individual	Marine and Environmental Research (MER) Lab
Partner organisation(s)	Blue Marine Foundation
Value of Darwin Plus Local grant award	£49,700.00
Project start date	**01/04/2024**
Project end date	**30/03/2025 (& extension 31/07/2025)**
Project leader name	Periklis Kleitou

Project website/Twitter/blog etc.	https://merresearch.com/portfolio-item/exploring-the-mesophotic-zone-of-cyprus-uk-overseas-territories-mesophos-2024-ongoing/
Report author(s) and date	Periklis Kleitou, Christina Michail, Christina Diamantopoulou, George Constantinou, Andreas Akathiotis, Ikaros Savva, Hassan Almetwaly, Angelos Pechlivanis, Demetris Kletou August 31, 2025
Project Summary	This is automatically inputted from the project application form – no need to complete here

Section 2: Project Outcomes

Successful Darwin Plus Local projects must demonstrate measurable outcome in at least one of the themes of Darwin Plus, either by the end of the project or soon after through a credible plan.

Please refer to your original application form/proposal. Please tick which theme(s) of Darwin Plus that you originally indicated your project underpins:

☒ **Biodiversity**: improving and conserving biodiversity, and slowing or reversing biodiversity loss and degradation;

☒ **Climate Change:** responding to, mitigating and adapting to climate change and its effects on the natural environment and local communities**;**.

☒ **Environmental quality**: improving the condition and protection of the natural environment;

☒ **Capability and capacity building**: enhancing the capacity within OTs, including through community engagement and awareness, to support the environment in the short-and long term.

This section enables you to report and reflect on how well your project met its original objective(s).

Please reflect on your project and how well you think it has achieved its original objective. Have there been other significant achievements or impacts of your project?

On a scale of 1 (high) to 5 (low), how successful do you think your project has been?

Please select which rating you would give your project using the scale below, where 1 means the project outcome was substantially exceeded and 5 means the project outcome substantially did not meet expectation**.** Below, you will be asked to give your reasons for the rating and describe what has changed as a result of your project.

1	Outcome substantially exceeded
2	Outcome moderately exceeded
3	Outcome met expectation
4	Outcome moderately did not meet expectation
5	Outcome substantially did not meet expectation

Project Outcomes and justification for rating above

Please explain why you have given the rating above. In your answer, you may want to consider:

i) What has changed as a result of the project? Where possible, concentrate on the actual changes achieved by your project rather than listing a series of activities undertaken. Activity does not necessarily mean a change has occurred.

ii) Has your project achieved its original objective(s) and outcomes? If you stated success indicators in your original application, have these been met and to what extent have these been met?

iii) Did you receive any recommended improvements in your feedback letter? If so, please outline how you considered these in your project implementation.

**Below you will be asked to submit appropriate evidence to support your comments.*

500 words max

We rated the project "1 – substantially exceeded" because we unlocked novel, spatially explicit evidence for mesophotic habitats that did not previously exist for the SBAs and could not be assumed a priori. We created the first baseline for Akrotiri and Dhekelia, integrating ROV surveys with LEK, multibeam products from the competent authority, and fishery-independent datasets to deliver a defensible, management-ready dataset.

Field delivery and data quality exceeded plan despite weather/operational constraints. We analysed 34 stations (Akrotiri 15; Dhekelia 19), with additional verification waypoints visited but excluded from analyses; several stations were revisited to secure ≥15 min on-bottom time and better imagery, totalling 44 dives. All footage was reviewed and a verified species–habitat inventory compiled, with identifications supported by ten Mediterranean taxonomic specialists.

What changed on the ground is certainty: Cyprus's mesophotic seascape contains high-value habitats (coralligenous assemblages, maerl/rhodolith beds, sponge grounds) with associated protected and conservation-relevant taxa, replacing assumptions with mapped evidence. We documented human pressures (marine litter/ghost gear, bottom-contact marks, invasive species) and recorded reef condition using a transparent COARSE framework, all of which directly inform prioritisation and monitoring.

Achievement against objectives and indicators is strong. Across both areas we recorded 223 taxonomic groups spanning 16 phyla (108 to species level) and produced harmonised inventories, habitat codes and condition scores suited to incidence data-meeting and in places surpassing what we proposed.

Stakeholder engagement and data access also went beyond plan. We contacted >60 fishers; 17 provided geo-referenced, time-stamped reports that refined site selection. In parallel, we worked closely with SBAA/DFMR, exchanging extensive correspondence; five staff facilitated access to multibeam echosounder layers from three DFMR projects and to fishery-independent information (MEDITS), which together increased detection probability of priority habitats. Methodologies and protocols were demonstrated to over >15 managers.

Dissemination and uptake were continuous. More than 55 posts were published on our social media channels. A project portfolio was created on our website. To increase visibility, we have been creating and disseminating short videos from the project. In addition, workshops with DFMR and a public event presented methods and results, and authorities acknowledged the importance of the findings. DFMR expressed interest in applying methodologies beyond the SBAs. A press release and a final small documentary-style video was posted two days ago (29 August) and disseminated by popular local media channels.

Near-term impact is clear. In Akrotiri, findings are being integrated into the fisheries co-management plan under development; in Dhekelia, results provide the first ecological baseline for protection planning. More broadly, the dataset provides immediate value to statutory frameworks (Habitats Directive/Natura 2000, Barcelona & Bern Conventions, GFCM spatial measures, MSFD, WFD) and supports IAS and marine spatial planning, ensuring decisions are now evidence-based.

Supporting evidence – file(s)

Please upload supporting evidence here. You may also provide a link to download supporting evidence in the following question.

For example, evidence might include photos of the project site before and after, results of surveys, maps, images, new management plans or other tools or outputs created through the project, or even a video documenting the impact the project has had on the environment and community.

Your answers and this evidence will be reviewed by an external reviewer.

Files: Please upload evidence to support your answer above. You may upload up to 10 files here, maximum 20MB each.

Links: Please provide links to access or download supporting evidence here. For example, evidence might include photos of the project site before and after, results of surveys, maps, images, new management plans or other tools or outputs created through the project, or even a video documenting the impact the project has had on the environment and community. Please provide hyperlinks here, along with a description and credit.

250 words max.

You may upload up to 10 files here, maximum 20MB each.

Files:

1. Socialmedia.xlsx – Excel showing the insights and posts/stories shared for the project
2. Sigmalive coverage.pdf – press release for the final project video published at a local online press
3. Workshop.pdf – Final presentation given to the general public at the final workshop of the project
4. 20250626 2.JPG – Photo from the final workshop of MESOPHOS project, 26/06/2025, Akrotiri, Cyprus
5. 20250626-1.JPG– Photo from the final workshop of MESOPHOS project, 26/06/2025, Akrotiri, Cyprus
6. DFMR_0725(2).png – Screenshots from the online presentation/training for DFMR personnel and presentation of project's findings and next steps
7. DFMR_0725(1).png – Screenshots from the online presentation/training for DFMR personnel and presentation of project's findings and next steps
8. Press release regarding the project end and findings (August 2025)
9. **Supplementary final report!!! It includes species found, maps with species presence, habitats classifications, statistical analyses, recommendations, monitoring protocol and guidelines, etc.**
10. Standard operating procedures / protocol for environmental surveys in mesophotic zones

Links:

- Final project video: [redacted]
- Press release published by local press: [redacted]

Project challenges

Did the project encounter problems, either anticipated or unexpected? If so, what actions did you take to resolve these problems?

250 words max.

The project encountered several technical and operational challenges, which led us to request (and obtain) a three-month extension to ensure the successful completion of the project. Fieldwork was initially delayed by the need for multiple risk assessments and approvals from the Sovereign Base Areas Administration (SBAA). These bureaucratic requirements were necessary for compliance but significantly extended the preparation phase. Persistent technical issues with the ROV also affected the schedule. Both original batteries failed at an early stage, and importing replacements was not feasible due to lithium transport restrictions. To resolve this, we sourced local expertise to refurbish the units and purchased additional batteries to avoid further disruption. The tether management system connector failed and had to be replaced internationally. In parallel, initial video quality was sub-optimal; after testing alternatives we integrated an auxiliary 4K action camera, which improved imagery and reliability. Obtaining and harmonising external datasets (multibeam bathymetry layers and MEDITS information) required sustained coordination with authorities; these sources, together with Local Ecological Knowledge, refined station selection and increased the likelihood of encountering sensitive habitats. A challenge was accurate species identification from photographs, particularly for small or cryptic taxa. To address this, we engaged >ten Mediterranean taxonomic specialists to assist with species validations. When on-bottom time was insufficient, sites were revisited to secure better footage (total ~44 dives). Overall, these actions turned anticipated setbacks into learning gains and delivered a robust evidence base to support protection and monitoring of mesophotic habitats.

Lessons Learned

Please describe any key lessons learned (administrative, management, technical, monitoring and communications) through the project, considering:

i) What worked well and why?

ii) What did not work well and why?

iii) If you had to do it again, what would you do differently?

iv) What recommendations would you make to others doing similar projects?

250 words max.

Several important lessons emerged through the project. On the administrative side, early and consistent communication with the Sovereign Base Areas Administration (SBAA) proved essential. While bureaucratic requirements delayed fieldwork, maintaining dialogue ensured compliance and built trust with authorities. Technically, redundancy and contingency planning were critical. Both ROV batteries failed early on, and replacements were difficult to source due to transport restrictions. Having additional spare parts and backups would have reduced downtime. Video quality was initially unsatisfactory; only after integrating a GoPro system did outputs meet the required standards. In future, pre-testing and customising equipment well in advance would save valuable time. For monitoring, combining Local Ecological Knowledge with early communication with authorities worked well, guiding site selection and fostering community ownership. However, species identification from images alone was challenging, underlining the value of partnering with taxonomic experts. On communications, social-media updates proved highly effective in raising awareness and public engagement. If repeated, more structured outputs could be planned from the beginning to maximise reach. If we were to redo the project, we would allocate time and budget for contingencies and spare parts, secure taxonomic expertise early (with dedicated budget), ensure capacity for specimen collection and molecular verification, and continue to combine stakeholder knowledge with field surveys to increase impact.

Section 3: Project Finance

This section seeks summary information about the finances of your project. If all receipts have not yet been received, please provide indicative figures and clearly mark them as draft. The final claim form will be taken as the final accounting for funds.

Project expenditure

Complete the expenditure table below, providing a breakdown of salaries, capital items and explanations of 'Other' costs. If the budget was changed since the project started, please clarify the main differences. **Explain in full** any significant variation in expenditure where this is +/- 10% of the approved budget lines.

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2023/24 Grant (£)	2023/24 Total actual Darwin Plus Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs	[redacted]			
Consultancy costs				
Overhead Costs				
Travel and subsistence				
Operating Costs				
Capital items				
Others				
TOTAL	49700	49811.03		

Please provide a short narrative summary on project finances;

Your comments should describe:

i) Any difference between the planned and actual expenses and reason(s) for this.
ii) If co-financing was secured for the project, what was this spent on.

250 words max.

Actual expenses changed due to unforeseen difficulties but covered by MER. Matched funding included mainly pro-bono time of MER, 10% overheads of direct costs and use of capital assets (boats, cars, ROV, etc.). Maintenance and purchases for the ROV e.g. auxiliary 4K action camera, fault batteries, tether damages, were covered by MER. BMF contributed pro-bono time.

Section 4: Contribution of project to Darwin Plus Programme Objectives

While the sections 4-6 are optional, it is very useful to complete it if you, where you can, because it helps demonstrate to funders how your project has contributed to the portfolio.

Please select up to **one** indicator that applies within **each group/indicator list (A, B, C, D)** and report your results for that indicator in the text box underneath. If you do not have relevant results to report for any of the indicators in a particular group, you can leave them blank.

Please also submit some form of evidence (above) to demonstrate any results you list below, where possible.

Group A: Capability and Capacity - Core Darwin Plus Standard Indicators (select one)

If you can report on one of these indicators for your project, please select the indicator from the menu below and report your corresponding result in the text box below.

☐ DPLUS-A01: Number of people from key national and local stakeholder groups completing structured and relevant training.

☐ DPLUS-A02: Number of secondments or placements completed by individuals of key local and national stakeholders.

☒ DPLUS-A03: Number of local/national organisations with improved capability and capacity as a result of project.

☐ DPLUS-A04: Number of people reporting that they are applying new capabilities (skills and knowledge) 6 (or more) months after training.

☐ DPLUS-A05: Number of trainers trained reporting to have delivered further training by the end of the project.**[Single choice of one of the above – select one of the above from the drop-down menu in the online form]*

Group A indicator result:

Please enter your results for the (above selected) indicator and the units. e.g. 10 people from key national and local stakeholder groups completed structured and relevant training.

50 words max.

MER personnel strengthened expertise in ROV deployment, survey design, ecological assessment, and species identification. Over 30 researchers/managers were engaged. More than 15 (both DFMR and SBAA) managers gained baseline data, methodologies, and monitoring protocols, receiving insights into mesophotic habitats and their management relevance.

Group B: Policies, Practices and Management- Core Darwin Plus Standard Indicators (select one)

If you can report on one of these indicators for your project, please select the indicator from the menu below and report your corresponding result in the text box below**.**

☐ DPLUS-B01 Number of new/improved habitat management plans available and endorsed.

☐ DPLUS-B02 Number of new/improved species management plans available and endorsed.

☐ DPLUS-B03: Number of new/improved community management plans available and endorsed.

☐ DPLUS-B04: Number of new/improved sustainable enterprises/ community benefits management plans available and endorsed*.

☒ DPLUS-B05: Number of people with increased participation in local communities / local management organisations (i.e., participation in Governance/citizen engagement).

☐ DPLUS-B06: Number of Local Stakeholders and Local Communities (people) with strengthened (recognised/clarified) tenure and/or rights.

**[Single choice of one of the above – shows as drop-down menu in the online form]*

Group B indicator result:

Please enter your results for the (above selected) indicator and the units. *e.g. 3 new species management plans available and endorsed.*

50 words max.

Outreach from partners channels reached more than 30,000 people, more were reached from popular media. Over 20 managers were informed about monitoring methodologies, findings, and their importance. Over 10 top taxonomic experts from the Mediterranean and Red Sea have been engaged for validations of species found.

Group C: Evidence and Best Practices - Core Darwin Plus Standard Indicators (select one)

If you can report on one of these indicators for your project, please select the indicator from the menu below and report your corresponding result in the text box below.

☐ DPLUS-C01: Number of best practice guides and knowledge products published and endorsed.

☐ DPLUS-C02: Number of new conservation or species stock assessments published.

☒ DPLUS-C03: New assessments of habitat conservation action needs published.

☐ DPLUS-C04: New assessments of community use of biodiversity resources published.

☐ DPLUS-C05: Number of projects contributing data, insights, and case studies to national Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) related reporting processes and calls for evidence.

***[Single choice of one of the above – shows as drop-down menu in the online form]*

Group C indicator result:

Please enter your results for the (above selected) indicator and the units. *e.g. 1 new assessment of habitat conservation action needs published.*

50 words max.

The project produced the first preliminary assessment of mesophotic habitats in Cyprus, identifying sensitive habitats and threats, and outlining conservation needs and priority areas, providing authorities with an evidence base to guide future protection and monitoring.

Group D: Sustainable Benefits to People, Biodiversity and Climate - Core Darwin Plus Standard Indicators (select one)

If you can report on one of these indicators for your project, please select the indicator from the menu below and report your corresponding result in the text box below.

☐ DPLUS-D01: Hectares of habitat under sustainable management practices.

☐ DPLUS-D02: Number of people whose disaster/climate resilience has been improved.

☐ DPLUS-D03: Number of policies with biodiversity provisions that have been enacted or amended.

***[Single choice of one of the above – shows as drop-down menu in the online form]*

Group D indicator result:

Please enter your results for the (above selected) indicator and the units. *e.g. 30 hectares of enriched forest under sustainable management practices*

50 words max

N/A but the evidences are currently being utilized for the design and development of sustainable management practices

Section 5: Project Partnerships, Wider Impacts and Contributions

This section is optional because it won't apply to all projects. **Please only complete this section if you can report on these for your project, referring to evidence.**

Project partnerships:

Please describe the engagement among all formal partners involved in this project. Focus on the following:

i) The roles of the various partners in the project, including in planning and decision making and in implementation.

ii) Was the Government of the Territory/Territories involved in this project? If so, how so?

iii) Particular achievements, lessons, strengths or challenges with the partnership(s) and how these have been addressed.

iv) Please also describe how key stakeholders and relevant local institutions, local communities and technical specialists, who are not formally partners in the project, have been involved.

250 words max.

MER led the project, overseeing survey design, ROV operations, data analysis, and dissemination. Also, MER convened ten leading Mediterranean taxonomic specialists (spanning annelids, cnidarians, corals, fish, molluscs, echinoderms, bryozoans, sponges, brachiopods, and tunicates) who verified all identifications. Thanks to their strong prior collaborations with MER and shared scientific interest, these experts contributed to the project despite limited time and resources. The Blue Marine Foundation (BMF), as a formal partner, provided an international policy framework and links to UK institutions, helping ensure the project's findings can inform conservation discussions for the UK Overseas Territories and beyond. Authorities were directly engaged throughout. The SBAA issued permits, risk assessments, and ensured compliance with regulations. Staff were kept updated and exposed to methodologies, though technical meetings were repeatedly postponed due to regional political issues; training and deeper involvement remain pending. The DFMR received detailed information on methodologies, ROV protocols, and results through workshops and briefings, and expressed interest in applying similar approaches outside the SBAs. Five authority staff supported access to core datasets, bathymetric, oceanographic, and fishing data from four DFMR projects. These inputs directly improved targeting of probable mesophotic features and ensured data compatibility with statutory workflows. Local Ecological Knowledge (LEK) strengthened site selection. We contacted >60 fishers; 17 provided geo-referenced, time-stamped observations (and images/videos) of habitat-forming taxa and reef-like features that refined the station list and built community ownership. Together, these partnerships combined local knowledge, technical expertise, and international policy leverage, strengthening both the evidence base and the pathways to management uptake.

Wider impacts and decision making: Has the project influenced wider decision-making or in any way helped embed environmental issues into decision-making? If so, please briefly outline how the project has done this and what the changes are.

250 words max.

The project has shifted mesophotic habitats from assumption to actionable evidence and opened clear paths for uptake by both the SBA Administration and DFMR. The final dataset-mapped reef/detritic features with condition scores, slots directly into existing instruments (e.g. Habitats Directive/Natura 2000, Barcelona SPA/BD, GFCM vulnerable-benthic provisions), enabling near-term, evidence-based measures. In Akrotiri, findings are being used to inform the fisheries co-management plan under development: mesophotic polygons and buffers are being translated into potential gear and anchoring rules to protect sensitive assemblages without unduly constraining coastal fleets.

In Dhekelia, the study provides the first ecological baseline for management planning and a template for zoning/monitoring that mirrors Akrotiri's approach. Because biodiversity oversight sits with the UK authorities while fisheries are managed by the Republic of Cyprus, the work also catalysed cross-jurisdictional dialogue: it identifies where a joint SBAA–DFMR arrangement would most efficiently align conservation objectives and fishing rules.

DFMR has acknowledged the value of the methods/data and expressed interest in applying them beyond the SBAs for wider conservation planning and fisheries management, extending the project's influence into national decision-making streams.

Finally, by pairing rigorous surveys with Local Ecological Knowledge, the project built community recognition and support around deeper-water biodiversity; several of the richest stations (including new national records) were located through fisher input, strengthening engagement.

Overall, the project has embedded mesophotic ecosystems into the conversation and workflows of both authorities, providing spatially explicit evidence, policy-ready products, and a shared framework that can be implemented now and scaled over time

Sustainability and legacy: Are there any continuing benefits resulting from the project, now that it has closed? What will happen to the project staff and resources now the Darwin Plus Local funding has ceased?

250 words max.

The project leaves durable value in three ways: evidence, capacity, and partnerships. First, the dataset (quality-checked imagery archive, station database, and species/habitat inventory with Barcelona codes and condition scores) forms the reference baseline for mesophotic monitoring in Akrotiri and Dhekelia and is being used to inform the Akrotiri fisheries co-management plan and other measures. The same products provide Dhekelia's first ecological baseline for protection planning and can be updated through repeat surveys.

Second, capacity built at MER is permanent. The team now operates a hardened ROV workflow (refurbished batteries, improved tether components, integrated 4K camera), standard operating procedures for mesophotic surveys, and expertise. These resources and skills will be applied in future projects; equipment remains at MER and is ready for rapid mobilisation. Staff will continue on other MER contracts and are available to support authorities with training, data interpretation, and method transfer.

Third, partnerships and communities persist. We will maintain the collaboration with SBAA/DFMR who have expressed interest in applying the methods beyond the SBAs and keep the Local Ecological Knowledge network active for future targeting and validation. The roster of Mediterranean taxonomic specialists remains engaged for ongoing identifications. Public-facing assets (short videos, final compilation) continue to raise awareness and can be reused in outreach.

MER will seek additional funding to repeat stations, expand coverage around Cyprus, and co-deliver training with authorities, ensuring the baseline evolves into an operational, long-term monitoring and management programme.

Section 6: Communications and Publicity

Exceptional Outcomes and Achievements: Do you have any excellent or exceptional outcomes or achievements from this project that you would like to showcase? If so, what material can you provide us for communications and publicity to promote Darwin Plus Local and your project?

Please provide a (300 to 400 word) summary and photos/videos/graphics that you are happy for us to use in publicity.

We may use material from this section to promote the achievements of Darwin Plus and the knowledge generated by Darwin Plus projects. This may include publication in the Defra Annual Report, Darwin Plus promotional material, including to the Biodiversity Challenge Funds social media platforms, or on the Darwin Plus, Gov UK or JNCC websites.

400 words max.

MESOPHOS achieved remarkable results in both scientific discovery and public outreach, raising awareness of the mesophotic ecosystems of Cyprus. For the first time, systematic surveys were carried out in the mesophotic zone of Akrotiri and Dhekelia with an ROV. These surveys revealed extensive assemblages of sponges, corals, anemones, and other benthic organisms that form complex three-dimensional habitats supporting rich biodiversity. Over 200 species were documented, including several not previously reported in Cyprus, many of them rare, protected, or threatened. These findings highlight the importance of mesophotic ecosystems as biodiversity refuges that indirectly support fisheries and contribute to marine resilience.

Equally important, the project documented human impacts even at these depths, including ghost gear, bottom-trawling scars, alien species, and coral necrosis likely linked to ocean warming. Given the slow growth and limited recovery potential of these ecosystems, MESOPHOS results underline the urgent need for targeted conservation measures, such as spatial restrictions on damaging activities, removal of marine litter and abandoned gear, and long-term monitoring.

To communicate project findings, a total of 54 posts and stories were published across MER's social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn), with a combined reach of more than 30,000 people. Of these, eight were short videos produced by the project team, providing updates on survey activities and highlighting key observations. The videos showcased key discoveries, including:

1. Amberjack swimming at 105 m

   [redacted]

2. Jellyfish swarms (>100 m)

   [redacted]

3. Stingray encounter (>100 m)

4. Cold-water coral reefs discovery in Cyprus (170–200 m)
5. Diverse reef life in the twilight zone
6. Mesophotic Zone (120–150 m)
7. Countdown – 9 days to MESOPHOS workshop
8. Countdown updates leading to the final workshop

A final video summarising the project's discoveries and outcomes was produced and published on YouTube - watch here: This video was also disseminated through the project's website, local press, and national media, accompanied by a bilingual press release (Greek and English) to ensure maximum visibility across audiences (example:

In addition, a dedicated project page was created on MER's website during the initiation of the project (MESOPHOS project page Through the same website, project updates and outputs were made accessible to the public. Key updates included:

1. A news post inviting people to the 1st MESOPHOS workshop:
2. Publication of the final project video and results:

Photo, video or graphic to be used for publicity and communications. Please upload at least one relevant and engaging image, video or graphic that you consent to be used alongside the above text in Defra, JNCC or NIRAS communications material.

By uploading these images, videos, or graphics you confirm that:

i) any people in the images or videos you share have consented to having their photograph taken.

ii) file name includes your project reference number and please provide the photo, graphic or video credits and captions in the text box below.

If you have content that was created in the course of the project, such as explanatory videos or impact graphics for reports, these can also be used for promotional purposes.

***Upload photo(s), video(s), etc. - Max 10 files; Max 20MB per file.**

Photo, video, and/or graphic captions and credits.

Please provide a short descriptive caption for each photograph, video or graphic, including the location (Territory) and photo or video credit in the box below. Please label each clearly with the file name. *e.g. FilenameDPLR1_1922 - photo caption/description - location (territory) - photo credit.*

500 words max.

- *DPL00075_1.mp4* – Video showing amberjacks recorded during the ROV expeditions of MER - Dhekelia, Cyprus - credits: MER Lab
- DPL00075_2.mp4 Video showing jellyfish swarms (*Aurelia aurita*) recorded during ROV surveys - Dhekelia, Cyprus - credits: MER Lab
- DPL00075_3.mp4 – A stingray *Dasyatis* sp. recorded during ROV surveys - Dhekelia, Cyprus - credits: MER Lab
- DPL00075_4.mp4 – Video showing cold corals identified during the first expeditions of MER at depths 170–200 m - Akrotiri, Cyprus - credits: MER Lab
- DPL00075_5.mp4 – Diverse reef life recorded in the twilight zone - Dhekelia, Cyprus - credits: MER Lab
- DPL00075_6.mp4 – Diverse reef life recorded in the mesophotic zone at 120-150 m depth - Dhekelia, Cyprus - credits: MER Lab
- DPL00075_7.mp4 – Reefs at depths of 50-70 of Akrotiri, recorded during ROV surveys - Akrotiri, Cyprus - credits: MER Lab
- DPL00075_8.mp4 – Diverse life recorded in the mesophotic zone at 100-170 m depth - Akrotiri, Cyprus - credits: MER Lab
- Final video – larger, please see link below

I agree for Darwin Plus/the Biodiversity Challenge Funds Secretariat and/or JNCC to publish the content of this section.

Please only select 'no' below, if you really cannot provide any relevant photos, etc, for reasons of sensitivity.

☐ Yes, I agree for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds Secretariat and/or JNCC to publish the content of this section.

☐ No, I have no project photos for reasons of sensitivity.

Please list any accounts that you would like tagged in online posts here. This can include project pages, partners' pages or individuals' accounts for any of the following platforms: LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram.

100 words max.

1. Instagram: @mer_lab_cy

   https://www.instagram.com/mer_lab_cy/

2. Facebook: Marine and Environmental Research - MER Lab (@MarineResearchCyprus) https://www.facebook.com/MarineResearchCyprus

3. Linkedin: Marine and Environmental Research (MER) Lab

   https://www.linkedin.com/company/marine-and-environmental-research-lab-ltd/?viewAsMember=true

Section 7: Darwin Plus Contacts

To assist us with future evaluation work and feedback on your report, please provide details for the main project contact(s) below. Please add new sections to the table if you are able to provide contact information for more people than there are sections below. If you are providing personal details on behalf of someone else, please ensure that they have agreed to sharing their information with us.

Please see our Privacy Notice on how contact details will be used and stored: https://darwinplus.org.uk/privacy-policy/

Please tick here to confirm that you have read and acknowledge the BCF's Privacy Notice on how contact details will be used and stored and that you have sought agreement from anyone that you are sharing personal details with us on their behalf.

☒ I confirm that I have read the Privacy Notice and have consent to share the following contact details.