



**540 hatchlings commence their journey to the ocean. The protection of the African Chameleon continues!**

*Costa Navarino, awarded with the Tourism for Tomorrow Awards 2014, continues its environmental actions in Messinia, Greece in cooperation with the ARCHELON and SHH non-profit organisations.*

**29 October 2015** – Athens. For the sixth year in a row, a protection programme of the Loggerhead sea turtle *Caretta caretta* is undertaken by Costa Navarino, the prime sustainable destination in the southwest of Peloponnese. The programme, a joint cooperation between TEMES SA and the ARCHELON non-profit association was successfully completed.



The programme aims to protect and record the reproductive cycle of the Loggerhead sea turtle *Caretta caretta* on the Romanos' beach, including its daily observation and control. The nesting period for 2015 lasted 61 days, with 16 nests being recorded in total. The first nest was created on June 5<sup>th</sup> June and the last one on August 5<sup>th</sup>. The nest positioning was mapped via GPS.

Eight out of the sixteen nests found at the Romanos' beach were transferred to a safer area, given their close proximity to the sea, possibly disrupting the egg-incubation process.

The *Caretta caretta* population reproductive cycle was recorded across neighboring beaches. The recording detected and protected an additional 18 nests that may have been created by the same Loggerhead turtles that had already laid their eggs at the Romanos beach. Overall, the recorded data showed an estimated 540 hatchlings commencing their first journey to the ocean!

**Theodore Benos-Palmer, Director of the ARCHELON** association reported *"Since the first year of Costa Navarino's operation, in the summer of 2010, ARCHELON established a joint cooperation with the destination market to protect the Loggerhead sea turtle *Caretta caretta* on the Romanos' beach. By applying specific measures, such as removing beach furniture at night and limiting the use of technical lights etc., we have mutually succeeded in supporting sea turtles to lay*

*their eggs on the beach and enabling hatchlings to safely reach the ocean. Furthermore, our efforts are complemented by rendering information to the visitors and organising events related to environmental sustainability in order to preserve these rare species found in the Messinian natural heritage. The collaboration between ARCHELON and Costa Navarino is a living proof where two species; man and turtle are able to coexist, even in sensitive areas, hence acting upon our motto that "We can all live together!"*

In addition, Costa Navarino in cooperation with the SOCIETAS HELLENICA HERPETOLOGICA (SHH) continues a dynamic protection programme of the African Chameleon (*Chamaeleo africanus*), for the second consecutive year.



The program began on September 10, 2015 and will run until the January 31, 2016. It aims to assess the current situation regarding the population of the African chameleon and map the most important habitats in the wider region of Pylos.

**Dr. Maria Dimaki, General Secretary of the SOCIETAS HELLENICA HERPETOLOGICA (SHH)** added: "The African Chameleon cannot be located anywhere else but the region of Peloponnese. According to the Red Book, it belongs to the Critically Endangered (CR) species in Greece." More specifically Dr. Dimaki, SHH adds that the cooperation with TEMES SA on recording the African chameleon's population is crucial, given its small size and limited habitat.



**Vassilis Karakousis, Environmental and Sustainability Manager, TEMES SA** stated: "The protection of ecosystems and rare biodiversity of Messinia has been central to the philosophy of Costa Navarino." Ultimately the objective is to create synergies with leading academic institutions in Greece and abroad, as well as local government, institutions and organisations such as ARCHELON and

SHH, in order to develop common actions and objectives, that will contribute to the destination's principles of sustainability.

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## **Editor's Notes:**

### **Costa Navarino**

Costa Navarino is the prime, sustainable destination in the Mediterranean, located in the Greek region of Messinia in the southwest Peloponnese. One of the most unspoiled and breathtaking seaside Mediterranean landscapes, this area has been shaped by 4,500 years of history. Its philosophy is driven by a genuine desire to promote Messinia, while protecting and preserving its natural beauty and heritage. It will comprise a number of distinct sites featuring 5-star deluxe hotels, luxury residences, conference facilities, spa and thalassotherapy centres, signature golf courses, as well as a wide range of unique year-round activities for adults and children. Navarino Dunes, the first area, is home to two luxury 5-star hotels, The Romanos, a Luxury Collection Resort and The Westin Resort, Costa Navarino; The Dunes Course – the first signature golf course in Greece- Anazoe Spa, a 4,000sq.m. spa & thalassotherapy centre; the state-of-the-art conference centre House of Events; specially designed facilities for children; as well as a variety of gastronomy venues, sports, outdoor and cultural activities. Navarino Bay, the second area is home to the signature golf course, The Bay Course.

Recent accolades for Costa Navarino include the Tourism for Tomorrow Awards 2014, World Travel Awards 2014, World Golf Awards 2014, National Champions at the European Business Awards 2014/15, Great Taste Awards 2014, as well as being selected by ABTA as the host destination for the Annual Convention in Peloponnese in 2015. The Anazoe Spa has been selected among Vogue's 'most magical spa breaks' for 2015.

High resolution photos and logos can be downloaded from the press section of the website's downloads [www.costanavarino.com](http://www.costanavarino.com), using the password: **nestor**.

### **ARCHELON**

The ARCHELON association protecting *Caretta caretta* is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1983 to study and protect these species and their habitats; manage the coastal ecosystems of the most important *Caretta caretta's* nesting beaches in Greece; protect the sick and injured turtles, as well as raise awareness and inform the public. ARCHELON is partners with the Mediterranean Action Plan of the Environment Programme of the United Nations (UNEP / MAP) and a member of the European Union for the Conservation of Coastal.

### **SOCIETAS HELLENICA HERPETOLOGICA (SHH)**

The SOCIETAS HELLENICA HERPETOLOGICA (SHH) is a non-profit organization based in the museum of Natural History in Crete. Its main goal is to protect and study the reptiles and amphibians of Greece, including their habitats. Among its specific objectives include the provision of information and counseling to the public; the organisation of conferences and meetings, in order to communicate and exchange scientific opinions in relation to the study of reptiles and amphibians.

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