



## SIDE EVENT AGENDA

### **SIDE EVENT TITLE : Protecting Sea Turtles in Rethymno: Uniting Tourism & Conservation Efforts**

**Time:** 17.4.24 | 16:00 – 16:50 | Multifunctional Room 2 Round Table Events

**Lead:** ARCHELON – The Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece

**Co-organizers:** Municipality of Rethymno, GRECOTEL HOTEL AND RESORTS, ECOCLUB SA

A panel discussion moderated by ARCHELON will explore successful conservation and sustainable tourism practices in Rethymno. The discussion will address challenges and opportunities in these areas and explore how collaboration can resolve them. It will also highlight how tourism can contribute to protecting sea turtles, emphasizing the importance of coexistence. The discussion will focus on the potential for sea



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turtle conservation to contribute to Rethymno's journey towards becoming a sustainable tourism destination.

Rethymno, renowned for its pristine beaches, faces a significant challenge: endangered sea turtles are losing their nesting sites due to tourism. Despite boasting one of Greece's largest sea turtle nesting areas, with approximately 300 nests annually, the destination's popularity threatens these vital habitats. Founded in 1983, ARCHELON is a non-profit association dedicated to studying and protecting sea turtles and their habitats. Since 1990, ARCHELON has focused on conserving sea turtle nesting grounds in Rethymno. Volunteers from around the world have participated in summer projects to implement conservation measures and raising awareness initiatives on responsible beach behavior. Over the years, ARCHELON has established partnerships with tourism establishments, local authorities, and experts. Furthermore, in collaboration with the TUI Care Foundation, ARCHELON is leading a groundbreaking initiative for Sea Turtle Friendly hotel certification, with two GRECOTEL hotels already recognized. The collaboration on awareness campaigns with the local Municipality aims to enlighten the public on this crucial issue of coexistence. This collaboration model between Public, Private, and Conservation NGO highlights best practices in destination management for the protection of sea turtles and their habitats.

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**Chairperson/ Daphne Mavrogiorgos – Director ARCHELON**



<b>Time (from-to)</b>	<b>Title of intervention/presentation Name, Affiliation</b>
16:00-16:10	<p><b><i>Daphne Mavrogiorgos – Director ARCHELON</i></b></p> <p><i>Welcome &amp; Introduction</i></p> <p><i>Short film (1.5 min): Witness the wonder of turtles nesting in Rethymno.</i></p> <p><i>Brief introduction about ARCHELON and the Rethymno Sea Turtle Conservation Project</i></p>
16:10-16:17	<p><b><i>Konstantinos Gasparakis – Appointed Municipal Councilor for Tourism, Municipality of Rethymno</i></b></p> <p><i>What are the biggest challenges and opportunities for resolving human-turtle conflicts through collaboration?</i></p> <p><i>The Rethymno Municipality's long-standing partnership with ARCHELON in raising awareness about sea turtle conservation for tourists and locals. Joint initiatives and future programs for sustainable coexistence.</i></p>
16:18-16:25	<p><b><i>Demetrios Kalaitzidakis – Group Operations Director at Grecotel Hotels &amp; Resorts</i></b></p> <p><i>How can the tourism industry actively contribute to protecting sea turtles?</i></p> <p><i>The 30-year collaboration between Grecotel Hotels &amp; Resorts and ARCHELON on tourist awareness and participation in the TUI Turtle-Friendly pilot hotel certification program.</i></p>
16:25-16:32	<p><b><i>Frosso Dimitrakopoulou – Principal Consultant, ECOCLUB SA, Ecological Tourism Consultancy</i></b></p> <p><i>Balancing tourism with conservation: How tourism can be a threat to nesting grounds, yet also become an asset for a sustainable Rethymno. Can the presence of nesting turtles contribute to Rethymno's development as a sustainable tourism destination?</i></p>



16:32-16:40

*Daphne Mavrogiorgos – Director ARCHELON*

*Closing remarks*

*Short film(1.5 min):, How to be a good tourist on a nesting beach*

16:40-16:50

*Q & A*