

Extensive information:

Project Sea Turtles
Peloponnesus Greece



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Note: This document will be updated annually. Although Global Spirit will do its best to keep the information as current as possible, please be aware that changes that will inevitably take place at the projects described below may not be outlined in this document.

Join the project with an open mind, and a flexible attitude and you will leave Greece with unique, special and unforgettable memories!



1. Sea turtle introduction

Sea turtles are reptiles that have totally adapted to sea life. Like all reptiles, they have lungs and need to surface occasionally to breathe, their skin is covered in scales and they lay eggs. Although they spend most of their lives at sea, they are dependent on land for reproduction. Unfortunately, all seven species of sea turtles are threatened mainly due to the degradation of their nesting habitats, pollution and human interaction (such as fisheries).

1.1 Anatomy

The Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) is one of three species of sea turtles that can be found in the Mediterranean Sea and the only one that nests in Greece. The loggerhead is one of the most widespread of all the marine turtles. Its common name comes from its relatively large head, which contains powerful jaws. The carapace (top shell) and flippers of the adult turtle are reddish-brown in colour, whilst the underneath (or plastron) is more yellow in appearance. Adults can reach a length of 80-100 cm and weigh about 80 kg.



1.2 Reproductive behaviour

Loggerhead turtles are pelagic animals. This means that they travel in the open sea but approach the coast when they are ready to reproduce.

They reach sexual maturity when they are 20-30 years old. The eggs have the same shape and size as a ping-pong ball and are laid in a dry part of a sandy beach. The eggs are placed in an egg chamber, which is usually dug in an undisturbed area and is about 50 cm deep. The female comes ashore and climbs up towards the back of the beach. She then makes a shallow hole in the sand called a body pit. Then she digs the egg chamber using her hind flippers, lays the eggs inside, and covers the nest with sand. There are usually 120 eggs per clutch, and each female lays approximately two clutches every 15 days. The females only come ashore to nest at night from the end of May until the end of August. The females usually nest every 2-3 years with 3-4 nests per season.

The nests must remain undisturbed in the warm sand for about 60 days before the eggs hatch. The hatchlings remain in the nest for several days before emerging to cross the beach and enter the sea.

Hatchlings can be seen emerging from their nests from late July until the end of October. They dig their way out of the nest in a joint effort and usually emerge during the night. They then make their way down to the sea by heading for the brightest source of light - in undisturbed beaches this is usually the reflection of the stars and moon in the ocean. This race from their nests to the sea is crucial for the turtles' survival. Although a female sea turtle may lay hundreds of eggs each summer, it is estimated that only a few hatchlings out of a thousand will survive to adulthood.

1.3 Diet

Loggerheads turtles are carnivorous and feed mainly on jellyfish, crustaceans such as sea urchins, and other slow-moving organisms. They have very powerful jaws which enable them to easily crush the hard shells of their prey.

1.4 Endangered species

Sea turtles have been swimming in our oceans and seas for over 150 million years. Contemporaries of the earliest dinosaurs, they appeared long before mankind. After having survived climatic and geological changes, sea turtles today face serious threats due to uncontrolled human exploitation. Although sea turtles spend the majority of their time at sea, their survival still depends on the condition of specific beaches. Amazingly, females will return to the beach where they were born to lay their eggs. Sadly, most of the beaches that sea turtles use for nesting have been destroyed or are under intense human pressure.

Threats to sea turtles today include the destruction of their nesting habitats, their accidental capture in fishing gear, the illegal wildlife trade and pollution.



2. The project

The project is a non-profit organisation founded in 1983 with the aim to protect sea turtles and their habitats in Greece. They work to raise public awareness about the dangers turtles face and lobby for the implementation of measures needed for their protection. For over 30 years, the project has been running conservation projects in Greece's main Loggerhead nesting sites. They've also started an environmental education programme directed towards Greek students and a Rescue Centre for the treatment and rehabilitation of injured turtles. More than 500 volunteers from all over the world participate in projects on Zakynthos, Crete, Peloponnesus and at the Rescue Centre in Athens.

2.1 The Peloponnese

The Peloponnese is also famous for its rich natural heritage. Many areas are included in the European Network "Natura 2000" because they are important habitats for priority species of flora and fauna, many of which are endemic. The inhabitants of the area mainly engage in agriculture and fishing, while recently there has been an increase in tourism-related activities.

After preliminary beach surveys carried out in early 1980s, the project identified a significant number of loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) sea turtle nests along some of the Peloponnese beaches. Since then, the project has been organizing projects for the monitoring of loggerhead reproductive activity, protection of their nests, and increasing public awareness about the sea turtles and the dangers they face. Every year, all projects take place at four of the most important nesting areas: the Kyparissia Bay area (2 projects), the Lakoniko Bay area, and Koroni and Romanos beaches. In recent years, about 30 km of beach (15km in the Kyparissia Bay area, 8.5 km in the Lakoniko Bay area, 2.5 km at Koroni and 3km at Romanos beach) are monitored every summer. On average, 1,140 loggerhead nests are made every year in the Peloponnese.

Kyparissia Bay, Lakoniko Bay and Romanos beach have been included in the European Network "Natura 2000" with the codes "THINES KYPARISSIAS" (GR2550005), "EKVOLES EVROTA" (GR2540003) and "PYLOS LAGOON (Divari) AND SFACTERIA ISLAND (AGHIOS DIMITRIOS)" (GR 2550004), respectively.

2.6 Human impacts

Up until now, the Peloponnese loggerhead nesting beaches have not been much affected by human intervention. In fact, many of them are part of the last, well-preserved coastal sand dune ecosystems in Greece. However, as in the rest of Greece, "development" plans are often designed without any environmental study and without respect for the uniqueness and importance of each region.

In particular, the increasing popularity and use of the beaches by tourists frequently places strong pressure on the ecosystems, mainly because of the improper organization of facilities for tourists by local entrepreneurs: Umbrellas, sun beds, artificial lights and vehicles on the beach are just some of the problems faced by sea turtles in the area. However, the fact that the majority of beaches in the Peloponnese have not yet been devastated by human intervention motivates the project to continue the great effort it has been making to maintain the areas in a state as close as possible to their natural one.

2.3 Nest Management

Predation by foxes and dogs is a common phenomenon on the Peloponnese beaches, and especially those which have a developed dune ecosystem at the back (e.g. Valtaki in Lakonikos bay), which serves as a natural shelter for wild animals such as foxes. All loggerhead nests found during the morning surveys on the beach are checked for the suitability of their location. If the location is deemed to be safe from inundation or damage from any other natural treat, then special equipment to protect the nests from predators is constructed around them. Specifically, a metal grid is placed in the sand above the nest and "anchored" with natural "pegs" from the region (i.e. bamboo sticks). A sign (in three languages ??- Greek, English, and German) informing the beach users about the nest and the aim of the protective enclosure is attached to it.

If a nest location is believed to be unsuitable (e.g. because it is very close to the sea and in danger of being flooded), the nest is relocated to a safer part of the beach or within a natural hatchery area set up by the project.

During the hatching period, the increased number of sources of artificial light on the back of the beach disorients hatchlings, who instinctively head towards the sea following the natural light in the night (moon and stars). Unfortunately, they can be attracted by the artificial lights and head towards the land instead of the sea. Efforts to gradually mitigate the problem of light pollution include communication with local authorities and local business operators to persuade them to switch off the lights that cause disorientation. If this is not possible and/or the effort is unsuccessful, the project places "light fences" around the nests. The fences, with a height of around 20cm, are made of old or donated beach mats and are inserted vertically into the sand along both sides and the back of the nest, thus creating a "path" towards the sea. This intervention significantly reduces the mortality of hatchlings caused by light pollution.

2.4 Cooperation with the local community

In the context of two LIFE-Nature projects, the project prepared a Special Environmental Study as well as a Management Plan for the coastal zone for the areas of Kyparissiakos and Lakonikos Bay, respectively. The aim of the project was to promote sustainable management of the areas in cooperation with local governments and the support of local communities. Implementation of the plan would effectively protect the environment and foster the viable development of the local economy.

In 1989, the first pilot fisheries program in Greece was launched by the project. Based in Gytheio, this program was the starting point for the expansion of the project activities at sea and the development of cooperative programs with the local community and, in particular, with fishermen in other areas.

Finally, the project promotes the incorporation of sea turtles in the Peloponnese's tourism product by demonstrating the mutual benefits of doing so: The preference of turtles for the area is an indication of a healthy, natural beach and sea environment, something which would appeal to tourists and a fact that can be promoted at a local and international level. In addition, the project's attempts to combat important problems the sea turtles face, such as pollution and coastal degradation, contribute towards sustaining a high-quality level of tourism.

2.5 Public Awareness

The aim of the Public Awareness program is to create mutual trust and cooperation between the project, the local community, and businesses operating locally in the tourism sector. The project operates three Information Stations in the Peloponnese: in the village of Kalo Nero (Messinia), at the beach of Mavrovouni (Lakonia), and at the port of Koroni (Messinia). Every year, about 15,000 visitors are informed about sea turtles and the dangers they face both at the Information Stations and through live presentations held in tourism venues. In addition, the general public is invited to observe various types of field activities (e.g. excavation of nests). The schedule of these events is communicated through the Information Stations, and gives the public the chance to watch the project team in action, and at the same time learn more about the biology of sea turtles and the threats that they face. At all Public Awareness activities, informational brochures are distributed in several languages.

Since 2000, the Environmental Station of Agiannaki (which was established with funding from the EU LIFE-Nature program) has been operating in the village of Agiannaki (Trifylia), near the town of Kyparissia. The Station is situated at the back of the beach of South Kyparissiakos Bay, the second most important nesting beach for the sea turtle *Caretta caretta* in the Mediterranean. The Hellenic Railways Organization (OSE) has kindly provided one of its buildings to house the Environmental Station, and every year (during May and June) a special Environmental Education program for primary, elementary and high school students is offered by the project.



3. Volunteers

3.1 Also Family opportunities

Families can now actively participate by helping the project's team of Peloponnese (Koroni and Lakonikos). They follow an independent schedule and participate in selected activities depending on the age of the children (8 to 18 years old). However, both parents and children become part of the voluntary team.

3.2 Period / duration

Volunteers are welcome on the project locations in the Peloponnesus;

- Kyparissia from 07 May – 30 September 2018
- Lakonikos from 25 May – 20 September 2018
- Koroni from 01 June - 15 September 2018

You are free to choose your own arrival date.

Your stay must be 28 days or longer, but the recommended duration is 6 weeks.

Long-term participation is highly appreciated.

Family volunteers:

You are free to choose your own arrival date in the period June – September 2018.

There is a minimum stay of 3 days and a maximum of 7 days.

3.3 Requirements

No prior experience in animal care or welfare is required to participate in the project.

However, the following ARE required:

- Minimum age of 18 years, unless from 8 years old and accompanied by a parent/caretaker.
- Volunteers must be able to communicate in English.
- Vaccinations (see medical advice section).

3.4 Fees

Participation fees are specified on the Global Spirit website.

These fees include:

- Accommodation (volunteers have to bring their own camp gear), except from Koroni project where the volunteers need to cover separately their accommodation cost
- Training and supervision
- 2 volunteer T-shirts and Turtle biology booklet (received upon arrival)
- Administrative costs

These fees do not include:

- Flight/travel to and from Peloponnesus, Greece
- Transfer to and from the project
- Passport (and visa if necessary)
- Travel insurance (compulsory for all participants) and cancellation insurance

- All meals
- Personal expenses such as telephone bills, internet, souvenirs, etc.
- Any excursions undertaken by the volunteer

These fees include for Family volunteering:

- Training and supervision
- Administrative costs

These fees do not include for family volunteering:

- Flight/travel to and from the Peloponnese, Greece
- Transfer to and from the project
- Passport (and visa if necessary)
- Travel insurance (compulsory for all participants) and cancellation insurance
- Accommodation
- All meals
- Personal expenses such as telephone bills, internet, souvenirs, etc.
- Any excursions undertaken by the volunteer

3.5 Accommodation

Koroni:

The project is based at the “Camping Koroni”, organized camp ground located at the entrance of the city, and just a five-minute walk to the city center. The campground provides the following facilities:

- WC
- shower with hot water
- kitchen with basic equipment
- washing machine
- wi-fi internet
- a *taverna* (=restaurant)
- cafeteria
- swimming pool
- sports facilities

And a very warm and friendly atmosphere. The location of the campground offers panoramic views of the city of Koroni, while just below is the small beach.

Within the campground, there is an area that is used exclusively by the project’s volunteers and contains all the equipment and facilities needed for daily life. These include a shaded kitchen, cooking equipment and stove, toilets, and showers.

Upon your arrival, it is necessary to give your passport to the staff at the Reception desk of the campsite. If the Reception desk is closed, go to the campground’s *taverna*, where you can always find someone in charge to help you.

The project is constantly trying to improve living conditions for volunteers, but the responsibility and the effort of each volunteer is needed to maintain and run the campsite. Thus, according to a weekly rotating schedule, every volunteer is assigned to help with the cleaning of the camp, toilets, kitchen, etc.



Kyparissia Bay:

This project will be based at the “Apollo Village”, campground located on the beach.

The campground provides the following facilities:

- WC
- shower with hot water
- kitchen with basic equipment
- wi-fi internet
- a *taverna* (=restaurant)
- café
- and a very warm and friendly atmosphere.

Within the campground, there is an area that is used exclusively by the project volunteers and contains all the equipment and facilities needed for daily life. These include a shaded kitchen, cooking equipment and stove, toilets, and showers.

The project is constantly trying to improve living conditions for volunteers, but the responsibility and the effort of each volunteer is needed to maintain and run the campsite. Thus, according to a weekly rotating schedule, every volunteer is assigned to help with the cleaning of the camp, toilets, kitchen, etc.



Lakonikos:

At this project location you will stay at The project will be based at the “Meltemi” campground located at the back of the beach, 4 km from Gytheio. The camping is situated in a beautiful olive grove and is one of the best organized campgrounds in Greece.

The campground provides the following facilities:

- WC
- shower with hot water
- kitchen with basic equipment
- wi-fi internet
- a *taverna* (=restaurant)
- café
- swimming pool
- washing machines and dryers (low cost ~ €4)
- and a very warm and friendly atmosphere.

Within the campground, there is an area that is used exclusively by the project volunteers and contains all the equipment and facilities needed for daily life. These include a shaded kitchen, cooking equipment and stove, toilets, and showers.

The project is constantly trying to improve living conditions for volunteers, but the responsibility and the effort of each volunteer is needed to maintain and run the campsite. Thus, according to a weekly rotating schedule, every volunteer is assigned to help with the cleaning of the camp, toilets, kitchen, etc.



Families cover their own accommodation.

You can bring your own tent or rent a bungalow at the camping.

For more information info@globalspirit.nl

The family volunteering program is carried out in the programs of Lakonikos and Koroni.

Groups (like scouts) cover their own accommodation

The groups have the option to either stay at the same camping with the rest of the volunteer team, but in a separate area from the other volunteers, or reside in one of the other camping and tourist facilities in the region. Please note that groups have the responsibility to find and reserve their stay during the days of their participation in the project.

In all projects volunteers must have a positive attitude towards working and living in a group and will have to accept the responsibilities that group living entails. Volunteers are also responsible for housekeeping duties.

3.6 The work

Peloponnesus hosts 1140 nests per year in the Bays of Kyparissia and Lakonikos, Koroni and Romanos beaches. The nesting season commences at the end of May and lasts until August. The hatching season starts at the end of July and lasts until October.

You will work 7 days a week (about 8 hours a day) and are entitled to 3 days off during a 28 day period.

WHAT TO EXPECT

An important part of your work as a volunteer will be the collection of scientific data during the nesting and hatching periods, as well as increasing public awareness about the work of the project, the sea turtles, and the challenges they face.

Collection of Scientific Data / Field Work

1. The nesting season normally starts at the end of May and lasts until about mid-August. The fieldwork during the nesting season includes:
 - a. Morning surveys to look for adult turtle tracks and locate nests, 'caging', or relocating threatened nests.
 - b. Night surveys to observe and tag nesting females. (Note: Night surveys are conducted when deemed logistically feasible by the project's Scientific Committee, and therefore are not always guaranteed to occur.)
 - c. Dealing with injured or dead turtles.

2. The hatching period starts in mid-July and lasts until the end of September. The monitoring work during hatching season includes:
 - a. Morning surveys to look for hatchling (baby turtle) tracks and locate nests, marking of hatching nests, dealing with any hatchlings that are still on the beach.
 - b. Shading of the nests to protect the hatchlings from disorientation due to light pollution.
 - c. Excavations of hatched nests to determine the hatching success.
 - d. Dealing with injured or dead turtles.

NOTE: The fieldwork includes long working hours in the heat (sometimes up to 6 hours at a time), and that working during night may take up to 12 hours. With an average level of fitness this is manageable, but please be prepared that the work can be hard and exhausting. With the right attitude and the right team, it is still fun!



Public Awareness Program

In order to protect the nests, the beaches and the turtles in water, the project runs a Public Awareness (PA) program. As a volunteer you will help to inform as many visitors as possible about the turtles and about the ways they can help to save the *Caretta caretta*. You will also take part in fundraising to collect money for covering the running costs of the project.

1. The project carries out PA work from the beginning of May until the end of the hatching season. The PA work includes:
 - a. Beach patrols, where the project's volunteers inform beach users about how to behave on the nesting beaches in order not to harm the nests.
 - b. Safeguarding of nesting beaches at night to prevent people from entering the beaches and therefore disturbing the turtles.
 - c. Running an information station/kiosk where people can get information about the turtles as well as the public events. Additionally, in the information station people can support the project by symbolically adopting a turtle.
 - d. Giving slide shows and informing the public at Information Tables at hotels.

General

Duties are allocated by the field leaders and involve all aspects of the daily routine (i.e. public awareness, nest and turtle protection, maintenance, cooking/cleaning). Volunteers and field leaders represent the project when they are both on and off duty. Therefore, proper behavior and appearance are essential at all times. Consumption of alcoholic beverages and smoking is not allowed during working hours. Furthermore, drug and alcohol abuse is not allowed in the camp at any time.

Remark

Volunteers who arrive at the beginning of the project will help set up the campsite, turning a field into a home for themselves and for the volunteers who will join the project throughout the summer (total average number of 100 volunteers). During the first two weeks, we prepare for the oncoming nesting season and carry out equipment maintenance. The same applies to the end of the program, when volunteers will be involved in the dismantling and storage of the camping equipment.



Family volunteering

The families will have the opportunity to participate in both monitoring and raising public awareness (PA) activities according to the needs of the project.

During their stay and depending on the current needs of the project families will also probably be involved in other activities of the project such as beach cleanings, collection of bamboo sticks in order to construct the protection of the nest, wooden constructions such as boxes for injured turtles and maintenance activities for the equipment. At the beginning of their participation, they will attend a presentation for the protection of sea turtles.



3.7 The project staff

The Peloponnesus projects have a coordinator who is assisted by seasonal personnel (field leaders). Field leaders and other experienced members of the project are responsible for allocating duties as well as training and supervising volunteers.

The Official language of communication on the project site is English. Knowledge of other languages such as German can also prove to be very useful for public awareness purposes.

4. Peloponnesus, Greece

4.1 Geography

Greece is a mountainous peninsula located in Southern Europe, on the Mediterranean Sea, between Albania, Bulgaria, Turkey and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Peloponnesus is situated at the southernmost part of the Greek mainland. The largest town in the area is Patra (170,000 inhabitants), one of the most important ports in Greece.

Having been inhabited since the Neolithic period (6000-2600 BC), Peloponnesus is rich in history and culture. It has been the focal point of many ancient civilisations like Mycenaean and the Spartans. Its rich cultural activity continued during the Byzantium Age. Peloponnesus played a key role during the Greek Independence against from the Ottoman Empire. All civilisations have left their mark in the area, which is rich in archaeological sites and architecture.

Peloponnesus is also known for its natural heritage. Due to the large number of species of fauna and flora (some of which are endemic) included in the appendices of the 92/43 Habitats Directive of the European Union, a large proportion of its surface is included in the NATURA 2000 network of protected areas. The main source of income in Peloponnesus has been agriculture and fishing, although there is increasing tourist activity.

4.2 Project Location

The project works in the three most important *Caretta caretta* nesting areas, the Bay of Kyparissia, Koroni and the Bay of Lakonikos.

- Kyparissia Bay

The Kyparissia Bay area is the second largest nesting habitat of the loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) sea turtle in the Mediterranean. It is situated in the western Peloponnese, and extends from Katakolo Cape in the north to Kounelos Cape in the south. The magnificent sandy beach is 46 km long, and it is only dissected by the Alfios River (which is the longest river in the Peloponnese) and two smaller ones – the Neda and the Arkadikos. The majestic scenery is characterized by the coastal forest of pine trees all along the upper part of the beach, by the largest and richest zone of sand dunes in Greece, and by the rhythm of the Ionian Sea, which offers moments of peace and relaxation.

In Kyparissiakos Bay, there are about 870 *Caretta caretta* nests annually, the majority of which (86%) are mainly found in the southernmost part of the Bay, and more specifically, in a 10 km area between the Neda estuary and the village of Kalo Nero, which area constitutes the heart of the habitat. This area has been included in the European Union Natura 2000 network under the code GR2550005 "Thines Kyparissias: Noehori - Kyparissia" mainly due to its importance for sea turtles nesting, as well as for the protected flora in the sand dunes zone. The sea area around the Bay has also been included in the same network of EU Natura 2000 protected areas under the code GR2330008 "Kyparissia Bay sea area: Katakolo Cape - Kyparissia" due to the existence of widespread *Posidonia* Meadows, i.e. areas of endemic sea grass species ("*Posidonia oceanica*" / "Neptune Grass") which constitute an important feeding and reproductive ground for a large number and variety of organisms.

Since 1983, the project has been conducting annual summer field projects in the area between the Neda estuary and Kalo Nero village, aiming to record data relating to the turtles' nesting activity as well as protecting the nests.

- Lakonikos Bay

The Lakonikos Bay project is conducted at the beaches surrounding Gytheio, a beautiful town characterized by its picturesque port, neoclassical houses, narrow, uphill alleys, stone-paved streets, and marble stairs. According to Greek mythology, Gytheio is the place where the god Apollo fought with Hercules for the magic tripod of the Delphic oracle, and where at the end they reconciled, giving the area its current name (Gytheio from the words “gi” and “theos”, which mean “Land of the gods”).

These unique, both in natural wealth and beauty, beaches of Lakonikos Bay (Mavrovouni, Valtaki, Selinitza, Vathy) have a total length of about 8.5 km and accommodate, on average, 210 loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*) nests every year, and the marine area is the only spot in Greece where another species of sea turtle, the green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), is frequently encountered in the sea. A part of this area has been included in the European Union Natura 2000 network under the code GR2540003 "EVROTAS DELTA" as it constitutes not only a nesting area for the sea turtles, but also serves as a rest, reproductive and foraging area for many bird species as well. Also, protected plant species such as the sea daffodil (*Pancratium maritimum*) flourish in the sand dunes zone. Finally, the marine ecosystems Lakonikos Bay include vast Posidonia Meadows, i.e. areas of endemic sea grass species (“*Posidonia oceanica*”/”Neptune Grass”) which constitute an important foraging and reproductive ground for a large number and variety of organisms and commercially significant fish.

Since 1983, the project has been conducting annual summer field projects in the area, aiming to record data relating to the turtles’ nesting activity as well as protecting the nests.

- Koroni:

Koroni, a beautiful coastal town in the province of Messinia, is located at the southwestern end of the Messinian Gulf and is about 50 km away from the city of Kalamata. It has a permanent population of about 2,000, most of whom are engaged in agriculture, fishing and tourism, while it is estimated that during the summer months, the population exceeds 10,000 since, because of its beauty, it is one of the major tourist destinations in Messinia. Koroni is famous for the Venetian castle which looms over the city, and it is especially picturesque due not only to its unique geographical position, but also its architecture and the golden beaches that surround it.

The significance of the Zaga-Memi beach in Koroni (2.7 km long) for the reproductive activity of the loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*) had been identified in the late 1980s. The beach is utilized by the loggerheads, and hosts an average of 46 nests every year. Since 1995, the project has been conducting annual summer field projects aiming to record data relating to the turtles’ nesting activity as well as protecting the nests.

4.3 Climate

Greece has a temperate climate. Dry, hot summer days are often relieved by seasonal breezes popularly called "meltemia". An outstanding feature of the Greek climate is its ample sunshine, estimated to be 3,000 hours per year. Winters are mild and the rainy season is between November and March.

Weather project locations:

The weather from mid-May to September is usually hot and sunny during the day, with temperatures sometimes exceeding 40oC (104oF).

During the night it can get quite cool and humid. At the beginning and at the end of the project, it can get cold during the nights.

In May and during the period starting in early September, the weather is cooler, with occasional rainstorms. During the night it can get cooler and humid.

4.4 Culture

Greece has a diverse culture that has been influenced by its location at the junction between the East and the West and by the many occupations endured by the Greek people throughout history.

Greeks are particularly proud of their culture and celebrate it with great passion; their culture helps to define their national and ethnic identity.

5. Travel information

5.1 Flight arrangements

Volunteers are responsible for their own flight arrangements. We advise you not to reserve your flight before we have confirmed your participation in the project (unless you are planning to include your participation as a part of a longer journey).

However, if you are unable to arrange your flight for any reason, please let us know on the booking sheet and Global Spirit will do what it can to help.

5.2 Passport and visa

To visit Greece, EU citizens will need a valid passport (or ID-card). The passport must be valid for at least six months after the date of your arrival. If you are not an EU citizen, **please check whether a visa is necessary at the Greek embassy in your country.**

5.3 Insurances

Every volunteer is required to have a travel (medical) insurance policy and cancellation insurance is highly recommended. You will not be permitted to work at the sea turtle project without travel (medical) insurance. Global Spirit can help you to arrange travel (medical) and cancellation insurance. If you'd like our help, please indicate this on the booking sheet. If you already have insurance(s) (or you are a participant outside the Netherlands) please send a copy of the policy to Global Spirit.

5.4 Arrival in Peloponnesus, Greece

You will be responsible for arranging your own transport to Peloponnesus, Greece as well as to the project location.

Specific directions describing how to get to your project location will be sent to you after your booking.



6. Medical advice

6.1 Advice

As Global Spirit is not a professional medical service, we advise you to go to a local clinic or medical authority in your own country for the appropriate medical advice.

This document is provided for informational purposes only

As a participant at this project you are responsible for your own actions. Global Spirit is not held responsible/liable for any unexpected casualties.

6.2 Required vaccinations

No vaccinations are required for working at this project.

6.3 Recommended vaccinations

You are recommended to be vaccinated against:

- DTP
- Hepatitis A

These vaccinations are not required, but are still very important to have.

6.4 Medical services Peloponnesus

Good medical services are available in the Peloponnesus.

If you should need a doctor or hospital, you can go to:

- Koroni: Koroni's Medical Center
- Kyparissia Bay: Kyparissia's Hospital
- Lakonikos Bay: Gytheio's Medical Center

If you should need medical attention, please contact a staff member of the project.

Pharmacies are also nearby every project camp.

7. Personal equipment

7.1 Essential items

The following is a list of items that you should bring with you:

- Valid passport (or ID-card)
- A tent
- Camping mattress
- Sleeping bag
- Work clothes for work on the beach (and dark clothes for working at night)
- Appropriate clothes and shoes for working with the public (e.g. presentations at hotels)
- Warm and comfortable clothes (May, June, September, October)
- Waterproof clothes (especially for May and September/October)
- A raincoat or poncho (especially for May and September/October)
- Strong, good walking shoes
- Slippers or sandals suitable for off road walking
- A hat or cap
- Sunglasses
- Insect/mosquito repellent
- First-aid kit with plasters and disinfectant
- Bathing/swimming suit
- A towel
- Sunscreen (it's recommended to use for at least SPF 15)
- Driver's license or boat licence (if you have one)
- Alarm clock
- Your smile...

7.2 Optional items

The following is a list of optional items you may choose to bring with you:

- Water bottle
- A watch
- A torch and spare batteries
- A Pocket knife
- Binoculars
- A lighter
- A notebook
- A compass
- A camera (and photographic materials)
- Toiletry articles
- Snorkelling equipment
- Mosquito net
- Something against dehydration like ORS (we advise you to drink a lot of water)
- Imodium or other anti-diarrhoea medication
- Books
- Magazines
- Snacks
- Etc.

8. General information (Peloponnesus, Greece)

8.1 Food and refreshments

Greek cuisine is famous for its high-quality products and the amazing taste of its food and wines. Some dishes are prepared similarly everywhere in Greece, whereas others are local culinary specialties or may be cooked in different styles depending on the region (like the Peloponnesus, etc...).

Cooking facilities are available at every project site on the Peloponnesus. Usually volunteers eat and cook together, splitting food expenses equally. At most projects, all volunteers put an amount (about € 25,00 - € 30,00) per week in the common pot for common food shopping. Any extra expenses are personal costs.



A minimum amount of € 15,00 per day should cover basic food costs.

Family volunteering will take care of the food themselves.

8.2 Supermarkets and markets

There are many supermarkets and markets available in Peloponnesus. Once you arrive at your project, a staff member will show you where supplies can be purchased.

8.3 Laundry services

There is a washing machine available at the Lakonikos and Koroni project site. At the Kyparissia project, hand wash is common.

8.4 Telephone

Volunteers will have to make their own arrangements when contacting their family and friends at home. The office phones are only to be used for emergencies.

There are several phone booths available near the campsites. Phone cards can be purchased.

Mobile phones can be used and network coverage is generally good except in some mountainous areas and on some small islands. The main operators are Vodafone, Cosmote and Telestet. Please contact your home phone company for the most updated information.

8.5 Internet access

Although all offices are equipped with internet connections, the office computers can only be used to receive urgent messages. However, all project camp areas have wifi and also internet cafes or other Internet facilities nearby.

8.6 Electricity

Greece's electricity system has a voltage of 220 Volt (50 Hertz). Round two-pin plugs can be used. North Americans will require a transformer and British volunteers will need to bring an adaptor. These can be purchased in specialised shops in your own country.

8.7 Transport during your stay

The project in the Peloponnesus covers the costs of transportation to and from work shifts when needed.

8.8 Excursion arrangements

Although you won't have much free time, you can arrange some excursions on your own or through travel agencies.

Here are some examples:

- The Ancient Olympia is 1,5h away from Kyparissia
- The River Neda with beautiful waterfalls is very close to the Kyparissia project area.
- Gytheio and tiny island of Kranai, close to Lakonikos project
- The koroni castle
- Polilimnio waterfalls, about 30 km of Koroni
- Etc.



8.9 Currency

The monetary unit of Greece is the Euro.

All project camps have ATM machines nearby.

At the Kyparissia project you can find an ATM in the town 20 km away from the campsite.

Credit cards such as American Express, Master Card and VISA are accepted in big hotels, shopping malls, and at most shops and restaurants. However, many shops do add an extra charge for paying with a credit card. They can be also used at most banks to obtain cash directly (also for an additional charge).

