THE MAJOR OUTCOMES OF THE PERSEUS AND BIODIVALUE PROJECTS
(www.perseus-net.eu, www.bioidvalue.eu)

Policy-oriented marine **E**nvironmental **R**esearch for the Southern European Seas (PERSEUS) is a research project that assesses the dual impact of human activity and natural pressures on the Mediterranean and Black Seas. PERSEUS, coordinated by the HCMR (Greece), merges natural and socio-economic sciences to predict the long-term effects of these pressures on marine ecosystems. The project aims to **design an effective and innovative research governance framework,** which will provide the basis for policymakers to turn back the tide on marine life degradation. PERSEUS is funded within FP7 as an Oceans of Tomorrow project and brings together 53 partners from 21 different countries. The projects deliverables reflect the objectives of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and are tailor-made for scientists, policy-makers and the media. Some of the many innovative initiatives launched within the course of the project include the ongoing multi-disciplinary marine research surveys, the development of the LitterWatch smart phone application and the organisation of training visits schemes (short internships) for budding professionals in the marine sciences at leading research institutes.

The BioDiValue project, co-financed by the Italia–Malta Operational Programme 2007–2013, involves eight Maltese and Sicilian partners, under the coordination of ARPA Siracusa. The main aims of the project are to quantify the volume of maritime traffic in the Malta-Sicily Channel by resorting to VTML databases and to data derived from HF radars, to categorise such traffic into different typologies of maritime traffic and to quantify the economic impact of the various types of pollution released by the same traffic. The project aims to develop a software tool – BioDiWare – which automatically computes such an economic impact when the number and type of vessels are fed to the software. The system will therefore measure the biophysical risk of biodiversity loss in the Strait of Sicily and will calculate the consequences caused to coastal communities. Different water quality parameters will be measured by the creation of a Towfish which could be deployed autonomously in the water column.

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