



## RECTORATE – PRESS OFFICE

**Date:** 14/06/2023

### **SMILES: A COST Action aiming to Enhance Small-Medium Islands resilience by securing the sustainability of Ecosystem Services**

European islands are hotspots of biological and cultural diversity, which, compared to mainland, are more vulnerable to climate change, tourism development, uncontrolled land use changes and financial crisis. These factors have increasingly resulted in severe impacts on socio-economic and environmental services. [SMILES - Enhancing Small-Medium Islands resilience by securing the sustainability of Ecosystem Services](#), a COST Action (CA21158) that brings together 155 scientists, researchers and academics from 27 countries, aims to provide a platform for coordinated interdisciplinary research on several aspects of mapping and assessment of ecosystem services in small and medium European Islands to synthesize and strengthen the knowledge base for conservation of island realms and contribute to their sustainable development.

Six Working Groups are working on the assessment of small-medium island ecosystems, examining their ecosystem services and the effects of land use and climate changes on these ecosystems, aiming to develop nature-based solutions for safeguarding ecosystem services of small-medium islands, and to formulate relevant policy and governance. Over the first six months of the Action, five Working Group meetings have been organised, a training workshop on methods and tools for understanding and communicating climate change scenarios has taken place, and several Short Term Scientific Missions to support Early Career Scientists working on islands have been implemented. The COST Action aims to contribute to most of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and most importantly to SDGs 13 (Climate Action), 14 (Life in Water) and 15 (Life on Land). The Action Chair is [Professor Ioannis Vogiatzakis](#), at the [Open University of Cyprus](#) (OUC),



<https://www.cost-smiles.eu/>

Funded by the Horizon 2020  
Framework Programme of the  
European Union

<https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA21158/>

