SIFNOS ISLAND COOPERATIVE ACTION
TO REDUCE THE USE OF PLASTIC BAGS

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SIFNOS

GORÉE
SMILO MEETING NOVEMBER 15/17
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Sifnos Island Energy & Development Cooperative (SIC) was founded in January 2014 on Sifnos Island, Greece, with main objective to achieve the Energy Autonomy of Sifnos Island through the development and utilization of RES.

To achieve this objective SIC has signed a Memorandum of Collaboration with the Municipality of Sifnos, became a member of REScoop.eu and conducted a comprehensive study for the energy autonomy of Sifnos Island from RES.

As the major objective of the SIC, the establishment of a Hybrid Power Plant is too big a project in the mind of most European citizens who feel confident on the perception that energy generation is a heavy industry endeavor and as it involves a long lasting licensing procedure during which nothing tangible can be produced, something had to be done to effectively communicate to the inhabitants of Sifnos Island the vision of the founding members of SIC.

It was decided to engage in a number of minor actions, one of which was the promotion of voluntary early compliance with EU Directive 215/720 for the reduction of the use of plastic bags.

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It turned out a full time 24 month long engagement that involved:

• Organizing the production by the members of SIC and the distribution to over forty outlets of over 10,000 reusable cloth bags

• Informing students with visits of members of the SIC in infants, in elementary and high school.

• Donation of a reusable SIC cloth bag to every student of the island and briefing on the action to reduce the use of plastic bags.

• Organizing an event for reducing the use of plastic bags with teachers and children on March 20, Earth Day with key-note speaker the Mayor of Sifnos Mr. Andreas Babounis

• Launching the “Do it like a Sifnian” campaign which reached 1,200,000 exclusive readers.
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The overall result of the SIC action to reduce the use of plastic bags in Sifnos Island, endorsed by the Mayor and the Municipality of Sifnos and favored by 80% of the local citizens and the vast majority of the visitors, was the reduction by almost 40% of the use of plastic bags in 2016, during which 12% more visitors arrived in Sifnos resulting in a tangible increase of the income of almost every family on the island. SIC’s intentions and competence are now well established among the local community.

And as there is very little we can do to accelerate the necessary permitting procedures for the construction of our proposed Hybrid Station from RES which will result in the long term energy sustainability of our island, we have come here, to the Smilo Meeting on the historic island of Gorée in order to get some fresh ideas on sustainable actions that could help us further enhance the living conditions on Sifnos island.

Thank you for your attention