



**LIFE  
ARCPROM**



ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΣ  
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HUMAN  
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ΑΡΚΟΥΔΑ  
ORSO  
BEAR

# INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

**FEBRUARY 25-26-27. 2025  
LARISSA. GREECE**

In the context of the LIFE PROJECT  
“ ARCPROM: Improving human-bear coexistence  
in 4 National Parks of South Europe ”

**FINAL EVENT:**  
Outcomes of the LIFE ARCPROM Project  
Advancing Knowledge and Practices  
for Human-Bear Coexistence



# CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

# WELCOME TO OUR CONFERENCE

## LIFE ARCPROM project

*“Improving human-bear coexistence in 4  
national parks of South Europe”*

is implemented by Callisto, Maiella National Park,  
Natural Environment & Climate Change Agency,  
University of Thessaly, University of Western  
Macedonia, and WWF Italy.

Project LIFE I8 NAT/GR/000768 - LIFE ARCPROM is  
co-financed by the LIFE Programme of the European  
Union, the Green Fund, and the Project Beneficiaries.



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Advancing Knowledge and Practices  
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# INVITED SPEAKERS

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## Aleksandar Dutsov

Biologist, Researcher, WWF Bulgaria  
Bulgaria



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## Robert Fletcher

Environmental anthropologist,  
Professor,  
Department of Social Sciences,  
Wageningen University and Research  
The Netherlands



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## Claudio Groff

Coordinator of the Large Carnivores  
Division, Wildlife Department of the  
Autonomous Province of Trento  
Italy  
Member of LCIE, IUCN Bear Specialist  
Group (European Brown Bear Expert Team  
& Human-Bear Conflicts Expert Team)



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## Aleksandar Pavlov

Biologist, Researcher, Macedonian  
Ecological Society (MES)  
North Macedonia



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## Svetoslava Toncheva

Associate Professor, Bulgarian  
Academy of Sciences (BAS), Institute  
for Ethnology and Folklore Studies  
with Ethnographic Museum  
Bulgaria



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## Alexander Trajce

Anthropologist, Director, PPNEA  
(Protection and Preservation of  
Natural Environment in Albania)  
Albania

Member of LCIE, IUCN Bear Specialist  
Group and Human-Wildlife Conflict and  
Coexistence Specialist Group





# DAY 1

08:30-09:30 JOIST FOYER  
REGISTRATIONS/ WELCOME COFFEE

# TUESDAY, 25-02-2025

### SESSION 1 10:00-12:00

**Bear Friendly Scheme Beneficiaries; Member Networking, Collaboration Opportunities & Label Implementation Challenges**, Coordination: Dimitris Chatzopoulos, UTH/Giovanna Di Domenico, MNP

### SESSION 2 10:00-12:00

**Monitoring Population Structure and Conservation Management of Brown Bears in Europe**, Coordination: Maria Satra, UTH  
10:00-10:15 *Evaluation of Brown Bear population status in the three national parks in Greece using IR cameras*, Yorgos Mertzanis/Stefanos Kyriakidis, Callisto  
10:15-10:45 *Genetic Analysis of Brown Bears in three national parks of Greece: Insights from the LIFE ARCPRM Project*, Tzoulia Tsalazidou, UTH  
10:45-11:00: *Bear presence monitoring in the Maiella National Park, Central Italy*, Antonio Antonucci, MNP  
11:00-11:15 *Challenges in the non-invasive genetic monitoring of the Appennine Brown bear*, Patrizia Giangregorio, ISPRA  
11:15-11:45 *Identification of sectors with high risk of Bear-Human conflicts*, Yorgos Mertzanis, Callisto and Hein Van Gils, MNP  
11:45-12:00 *Discussion*

**12:00-12:15 JOIST FOYER  
COFFEE BREAK**

### SESSION 3 12:15-13:15

**The Bear Friendly labelling strategy within the Project and the entrepreneur's challenges**  
12:15-12:35 *The establishment and implementation of the "RESPECT" label for wildlife and biodiversity conservation in Greece*, Mary Spentzou, UTH  
12:35-12:55 *The Bear Friendly label in the Maiella National Park: a tool to promote coexistence and preserve the ecosystem*, Giovanna Di Domenico, MNP  
12:55-13:15 *Experience of the Bear Friendly label implementation, Label Beneficiaries*

### SESSION 4 12:15-13:15

**Genetic Tools for Biodiversity Conservation: From DNA Barcoding to Wildlife Studies**  
12:15-12:45 *Building GrBOL, the Greek Barcoding Node for the conservation of our biodiversity*, Alexandros Triantafyllidis, AUTH  
12:45-13:15 *Non-invasive genetic studies of large carnivores in Greece*, Nikoleta Karaiskou, AUTH

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# JOIST INNOVATION PARK, LARISSA

DAY 1 TUESDAY, 25-02-2025

13:15-14:00 *Tribute Ceremony  
Honoring the Contributions of Emeritus  
Professor K. Triantafyllidis to Genetics*

Charalambos Billinis, DVM, Dipl.  
ECZM (Wildlife Population Health) -  
Rector UTH

Acceptance Speech, Konstantinos  
Triantafyllidis, Emeritus Prof. AUTH

*“Genetic Editing of Animal  
Genomes for Agriculture and  
Biomedicine”*

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**Konstantinos Triantafyllidis**

Emeritus Professor of Genetics

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Greece

JOIST INNOVATION PARK, LARISSA



14:00-14:30 JOIST FOYER  
NETWORKING LUNCH BREAK

### **SESSION 3 (continued)**

14:30-14:45: *The promotion of the Bear Friendly label in the Maiella National Park. Present and future perspectives*, Giovanna Di Domenico, MNP

### **WORKSHOP 14:45-16:30**

**Marketing and Communication Strategies for promoting wildlife-friendly products and services**, Evi Chatzopoulou, Maria Argyropoulou, UoP

### **ROUND TABLE 14:30-16:30**

**Veterinary Forensics & Necropsy Procedures for Identifying Attacks by Large Carnivores**,  
Coordination: Elpida Grigoriadou, NECCA

14:30-14:50 *Necropsy findings on domestic prey of large carnivores. From insight into predator/prey interaction to addressing for coexistence*, Simone Angelucci, MNP

15:00-15:20 *Investigating wildlife crimes: The fundamentals of forensic necropsy and the legislative challenges in Greece*, Dimitrios Doukas, UTH

15:30-15:50 *Investigating wildlife crimes: Confirmation of poisoning in wildlife through analytical toxicological analyses/ most common active substances detected in Greece*, Panagiota Michalopoulou, Ministry of Rural Development and Food of Greece

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DAY 1  
TUESDAY, 25-02-2025

OPENING  
CEREMONY  
18:30-20:00

WELCOME  
DINNER  
20:00-20:30

UNIVERSITY OF THESSALY  
SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES  
FACULTY OF MEDICINE

AMFITHEATRE HIPPOCRATES



## CONFERENCE OPENING CEREMONY

18:30-18:40 **Welcome Speech**, Charalambos Billinis, Rector of the University of Thessaly

18:40-19:00 **Welcome-Opening remarks**, Official Representatives

19:00-19:20 **Presentation of the objectives, efforts to achieve them and achievements of the LIFE ARCPROM Project**, Spyros Psaroudas/CALLISTO, Project Manager

19:30-20:00 **Screening of the LIFE ARCPROM Documentary, VIDEO**



DAY 2

WEDNESDAY, 26-02-2025

JOIST FOYER

08:30-09:15 REGISTRATIONS/WELCOME COFFEE

11:30-11:45 COFFEE BREAK

**SESSION 5 09:15-11:30**

**Mitigating bear-human interference: Project activities, issues encountered, and solutions given**

- 09:15-09:30 *Staff Training for National Parks and Other Conservation Stakeholders in the Project Areas, Dimitris Chatzopoulos, UTH*
- 09:30-10:00 *Operation, equipment, and capacity building of Bear Emergency Teams (BETs) & use of deterring devices, Yorgos Mertzanis, Callisto*
- 10:00-10:30 *Bear Emergency Team interventions and use of deterring devices in the Maiella National Park", Giovanna Di Domenico, MNP*
- 10:30-11:00 *Non-Lethal Techniques to Reduce Conflicts with Bears: Electric Fencing & bear-proof devices in three National Parks in Greece, Elpida Grigoriadou, NECCA/Yorgos Mertzanis, Callisto*
- 11:00-11:30 *Use of damage prevention measures in the Maiella National Park, Giovanna Di Domenico, MNP*

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**JOIST INNOVATION PARK, LARISSA**





# DAY 2

# WEDNESDAY, 26-02-2025

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## **KEYNOTE SPEECH | 11:45-12:05**

*Challenges and implications of brown bear management and conservation in Trentino – Italy*  
Claudio Groff, Wildlife Dep. of Trento

## **KEYNOTE SPEECHES – ROUND TABLE | 12:05-14:00**

Coordination: Yorgos Mertzanis, Spyros Psaroudas, Callisto

### **Brief Overview of Ongoing Initiatives for the Conservation of Bear Populations in Southern Europe**

12:05-12:20: *Challenges for bear conservation in Bulgaria*, Aleksandar Dutsov, WWF Bulgaria

12:20-12:35: *Brown bears in Albania: insights from ecological and social research*, Alexander Trajce, PPNEA

12:35-12:50: *The Current Status of the Brown Bear in North Macedonia*, Aleksandar Pavlov, MES

12:50-13:00: Discussion

13:00-13:15: *Apennine brown bear status and the role of the Maiella National Park in its conservation*, Antonio Antonucci, MNP

13:15-13:25 *The experience of Bear Smart Communities in the Central Apennines, Italy - Towards a culture of coexistence*, Daniela Gentile, Rewilding Apennines

13:25-13:40 *Bear Conservation Projects in Spain*, Maria Paragga, Fundacion Oso Pardo

13:45–14:00: **Establishment of a Network of organizations and experts working on Conservation of Large Carnivores in Southern Europe**, Callisto & associates, and LIFE projects beneficiaries

**14:00-14:30 JOIST FOYER NETWORKING LUNCH BREAK**

# JOIST INNOVATION PARK



# DAY 2

# WEDNESDAY, 26-02-2025

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## **WORKSHOP 14:30-16:30**

### **Human Dimensions of Environmental Management**

14:30-14:50: *Human dimensions in large carnivore conservation and management: From the “knowledge-deficit” model to participatory processes*, Tasos Hovardas, Callisto

14:50-15:05: *Lessons learned from participatory processes in LIFE ARCPROM: Implications for stakeholder engagement in large carnivore conservation and management*, Georgios Chatzinakos, Callisto

15:05-15:20: *Small-technologies, social innovation, and human-wildlife coexistence in rural Greece*, Dimitrios Bormpoudakis, Callisto

15:20-15:35: *Stakeholder involvement in the Maiella National Park during the LIFE ARCPROM: methods, highlights and results*, Anna Crimella, MNP

15:35-15:50 *Human - large carnivores' coexistence: the context matters! Differences between Alps and Apennines in Italy*, Anna Crimella, MNP

15:50-16:10 *Methods and tools for participatory processes in large carnivore conservation and management*, Callisto HD Group

16:10-16:30 *Emerging tools and technologies at the wildlife-livestock interface*, Callisto HD Group

## **SESSION 6 14:30-16:30**

### **Working Dogs in Wildlife Management and Protection**

14:30-14:50: *Detection Dogs as a Tool Against Poisoned Baits: A Review of the First Units in Greece*, Victoria Saravia-Mullin, Hellenic Ornithological Society

14:50- 15:10: *Dogs battling the crime of poison baits in Greece: Results of the Antipoison Canine Units (A.C.U.) of the Natural Environment and Climate Change Agency (N.E.C.C.A.)*, Dimitris Vavylis, ACU Coordinator, NECCA

15:10-15:30: *Working dogs and bear management: The formation of the pilot KBD unit in Greece. Lessons learned and future prospects*, Athanasios Korakis, NECCA

15:30-15:50: *Dog skills for biodiversity conservation*, Ela Kret, Society for the Protection of Biodiversity of Thrace

15:50-16:10: *Livestock Guardian Dogs; Establishment and operation of a high-performance LGDs network under Life ARCPROM project*, Alexios Giannakopoulos, UTH

**16:30-16:45 JOIST FOYER  
COFFEE BREAK**

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# JOIST INNOVATION PARK, LARISSA



# DAY 2

# WEDNESDAY, 26-02-2025

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## **SESSION 7 16:45-18:30**

### **Environmental Education as a Framework for Wildlife Protection and Conservation / Volunteering and Awareness Raising Activities**

16:45-17:00: *Teaching approaches in effective environmental culture and awareness through art*, Evita Aggeli, LBSC associate

17:00-17:15: *On the Paths of Coexistence: Environmental paths for the coexistence of human and bears*, Effie Gelastopoulou/ Loukia Argiriadou, Callisto

17:15-17:30: *Communication and awareness raising as tools for the conservation of large carnivores: the role of WWF. Italy*, Marco Antonelli, WWF Italy

17:30-17:45: *Volunteering for wildlife protection: Tackling the illegal use of poison baits*, Effie Gelastopoulou/ Maria Psaralexi, Callisto

17:45 - 18:00: *Mobilisation of volunteers for communication and conservation activities in the Maiella National Park*, Marco Antonelli, WWF Italy

18:00-18:15: *Towards an Ecological Dimension of Visual Identity: The Contribution of the School of Fine Arts of Florina*, Yannis Ziogas/ Sofia Papadopoulou/ Cynthia Gerothanasiou / Annita Koutsonanou, UoWM

## **KEYNOTE SPEECH 18:30-19:15**

### **Cultivating Conviviality in Human-Wildlife Relations: Challenges and Opportunities**

Robert Fletcher, WUR & Svetoslava Toncheva, BAS

# JOIST INNOVATION PARK, LARISSA

# A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO OUR SPEAKERS

1. Aggeli Evita, Educator-Puppeteer, LBSC associate
2. Angelucci Simone, DVM, MNP
3. Antonelli Marco, Wildlife Conservation Specialist, WWF Italy
4. Antonucci Antonio, PhD, Zoologist, MNP
5. Argiriadou Loukia, Communication Expert, Callisto
6. Argyropoulou Maria, Teaching Staff, Dep. Touristic Studies, UoP
7. Billinis Charalambos, DVM, Dipl. ECZM (Wildlife Population Health), Rector UTH
8. Bormpoudakis Dimitrios, PhD, Biodiversity Management, Callisto
9. Chatzinakos Georgios, PhD, Human Geographer, Callisto
10. Chatzopoulos Dimitrios, DVM, Assistant Professor, UTH
11. Chatzopoulou Evi, Assistant Professor in Marketing, UoP
12. Crimella Anna, Environmental Scientist, MNP
13. Di Domenico Giovanna, PhD, Wildlife Biologist, MNP
14. Doukas Dimitrios, DVM, Assistant Professor, UTH
15. Galaverni Marco, PhD, Oases, Education & Activation Director
16. Gelastopoulou Effie, Social Worker specializing in Environmental Education, Callisto
17. Gentile Daniela, Communications Officer, Rewilding Apennines
18. Gerothanasiou Cynthia, Special Teaching Staff, UoWM
19. Giangregorio Patrizia, PdD, Biologist, ISPRA
20. Giannakopoulos Alexios, Forester, LGDs Expert, Special Teaching Staff, UTH
21. Grigoriadou Elpida, Biologist, NECCA
22. Hovardas Tasos, PhD, Human Dimensions Expert in large carnivore conservation and management, Callisto
23. Karaiskou Nikoleta, Biologist, Assistant Professor, AUTH
24. Korakis Athanasios, Environmental Scientist, NECCA
25. Koutsonanou Annita, Adjunct Professor, UOWM
26. Kret Elzbieta, Environmental Scientist, Society for the Protection of Biodiversity of Thrace
27. Kyriakidis Stefanos, Forester, Callisto
28. Mertzanis Yorgos, PhD, Biologist, Callisto
29. Michalopoulou Panagiota, DVM, Ministry of Rural Development and Food
30. Papadopoulou Sofia, Assistant Professor, UOWM
31. Paragga Maria, Fundacion Oso Pardo, Asturias, Spain
32. Psaralexi Maria, PhD, Biologist, Callisto
33. Psaroudas Spyros, LIFE ARCPROM Project Manager
34. Saravia-Mullin Victoria, Hellenic Ornithological Society
35. Satra Maria, Biologist, Assistant Professor, UTH
36. Spentzou Mary, Agronomist-Food Scientist, UTH
37. Triantafyllidis Alexandros, Biologist, Professor, AUTH
38. Tsalazidou-Founta Tzoulia-Maria, Biologist, UTH
39. Vavylis Dimitris, Biologist, ACU Coordinator, NECCA
40. Ziogas Yannis, Professor, UoWM

DAY 1-2

25 -26.02.2025

SIDE  
EVENTS

JOIST INNOVATION  
PARK, LARISSA

## **Human-Bear Coexistence Exhibition**

Curated by UOWM Creative Team

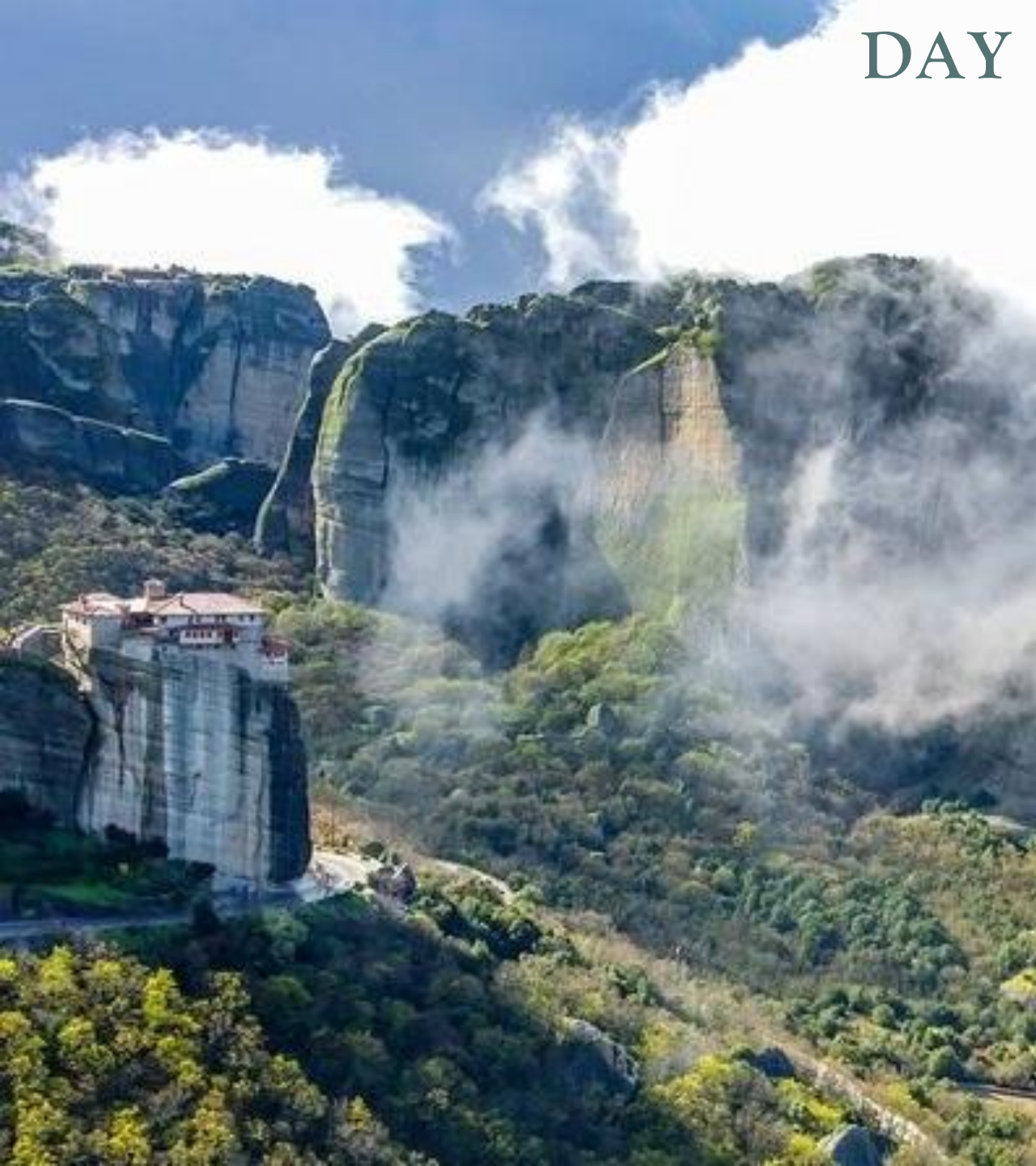
Yannis Ziogas, Sofia Papadopoulou, Cynthia Gerothanasiou, Annita Koutsonanou

Department of Fine and Applied Arts, School of Fine Arts, University of Western Macedonia (UoWM)

## **Bear-Friendly Products Exhibition**

Laboratory of Microbiology and Parasitology, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Thessaly (UTH)

DAY 3 THURSDAY, 27-02-2025



## FIELD TRIP

### TRIKALA – METEORA AREA, REGION OF THESSALY

- ❑ Visit to sites where actions supporting the human-bear coexistence are implemented
- ❑ Brief field demonstration of NECCA's Dogs Operational Skills: Antipoison Dog Units & Karelian Bear Dogs

08:30..... Start of the Field Visit  
09:00-14:00..... Sites visit  
14:00-14:30..... Light lunch  
14:30-17:00 ...Continuation of the sites visit and return to Larissa

DETAILS TO BE ANNOUNCED SOON