

recycle.corfu.gr : An award-winning online guide to sustainable waste management for the Municipality of Central Corfu and Diapontia Islands

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The recycle.corfu.gr is the first municipal website in the history of the island of Corfu dedicated exclusively to issues related to local sustainable waste management (prevention, reuse, recycling with "Sorting at Source") but also to the available solutions offered for separate collection of the different waste streams in the Municipality of Central Corfu and Diapontia Islands.

It was created and published online in the form of an easy-to-use online guide in March 2021 so the citizens of the Municipality of Central Corfu and Diapontia Islands can be helped and participate more effectively in the critical stage of «Sorting at Source». This comes by offering them up-to-date and valid information as answers to the following important questions:

- *Which* waste streams can currently be redirected to sustainable management?
- *Why* should each of them be redirected and what are the resulting profits?
- *How* can they reuse each of them and/or how should they prepare each material for the best practice of "Sorting at Source"?
- *Where* geographically, per municipal unit of the Municipality, can a special bin available for separate collection be found for each waste stream, using a special search tool in the "Recycling Map" field?

All of the above help citizens decisively reduce their failures at the critical stage of "Sorting at Source" and effectively participate in the sustainable management of their waste which will continuously and steadily increase their overall participation rates and at the same time the Municipality will be helped with increased corresponding recycling rates and decreased rates of mixed waste that will be sent for landfilling. In the meantime, pending the procurement of the appropriate equipment (sensors, GPS trackers, software, etc.) the site will also try to answer the last important question in the future, which is "*When*" should citizens dispose of their waste in the bins.

The website was created with the Municipality's own financial resources, while the Scientific Advisor to the Mayor (until 31st of December 2023), Mr. Victor Dimoulis was the designer and the sole person responsible for providing the general specifications of the website, always taking into account the special characteristics of the Municipality of Central Corfu and Diapontia Islands. At the same time, Mr. Victor Dimoulis developed and fully edited the entire content included in it (texts, images, etc.).

At the same time, it is also the place of publicity for the overall efforts paid by the Municipality for the reduction of its environmental footprint and its gradual transformation into a "green", "smart" and "digital" Municipality, which are listed in the form of informative articles or Press Releases in the "Articles" field.

Before the online publication of recycle.corfu.gr in March 2021, there was generally no (or was not known) similar detailed online guide at the level of Municipalities in Greece that would provide citizens of a Municipality with up-to-date, solid, and easy-to-understand dedicated information on issues related to the sustainable management of their citizens' waste and the available solutions for the separate collection of the different waste streams, especially for the areas of their Municipality.

This site can very easily be replicated by other similar bodies (Municipalities) simply by adapting the content of the information, according to their unique characteristics, mostly when it is to answer the following questions:

- *Which* waste streams can currently be redirected to sustainable management?
- *Where* geographically, per municipal unit of their Municipality, can a special bin available for separate collection be found for each waste stream?
- *When* should citizens dispose of their waste in the bins and/or will the waste trucks be near each area of their Municipality?

The recycle.corfu.gr from its initial online publication in March 2021 until the 31st of December 2023 has more than 23,000 views as total traffic of all its web pages. In this period of time, if taken into account: a) the clear increase (almost 400 tons) of the quantities of specific waste streams (WEEE, batteries, used clothes, etc.) that have been collected and their high "purity", b) which have come from municipal separate collection points where they became widely known through the website, can lead to the safe conclusion that the recycle.corfu.gr has significantly contributed to this success.

The recycle.corfu.gr in the same period of time was awarded 1st place and the «Environmental Information» award, in the category «ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS – ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION» in the context of the «GREEK GREEN AWARDS 2023».

Also, it has been included in the Tech4Good Marketplace which is a European Commission's online platform that was created within the framework of the «100 Intelligent Cities Challenge» and aims to boost access to ethical, environmentally sustainable, digitally enabled solutions that are human-centred, affordable and solve concrete challenges within cities and communities.

But its greatest distinction until the 31st of December 2023 is that it was officially recognized as an innovative practice of the wider Public Sector by the "Department of Innovation and Best Practices" of the Directorate of Strategic Planning and Innovation of the General Secretariat of Human Resources of the Public Sector of the Greek Ministry of the Interior. It is the only innovation that was selected and comes from a Public body that is based more broadly in the Region of Ionian Islands.