



# 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

**WORKING TOGETHER TO PRESERVE THE  
NATURAL BEAUTY OF THE AEOLIAN ISLANDS**

[www.aeolianpreservationfund.org](http://www.aeolianpreservationfund.org)

The Aeolian Islands Preservation Fund (AIPP)  
Registered charity number: 1165884



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# WHO WE ARE

A blue-tinted photograph of a diver swimming horizontally over a dense field of seagrass. The diver is in the upper right quadrant, moving towards the left. The seagrass fills the bottom half of the frame, and the water is clear with some small fish visible in the background.

The AIPF helps preserve the exceptional beauty and natural value of the archipelago, and encourages a more sustainable, and responsible approach to tourism, promoting the unique experiences that the local habitat and natural phenomenon offer.

**We aim to empower the local communities by raising awareness about sustainability, hoping over time that environmental concerns will be integrated into all walks of life. We identify partners to can reinforce and grow local capacity, so that the work we do is impactful over the long term, and will ensure the Aeolians retain their natural appeal for generations to come.**

The stunning beauty of the Aeolian Islands has attracted explorers and travellers throughout history. The first inhabitants of Aeolian's arrived around 5000 B.C.; in every island there are visible signs of settlement and archaeological remains. Etruscans, Greeks, Romans before, then Arabs, Christians, Aragoans, Turks. The Aeolian Islands are a Unesco World Heritage Site, due to their unique volcanology - with both Vulcano and Stromboli being live volcanos.

In recent years the Aeolian Islands have undergone considerable growth, leading to an unmanageable requirement for resources such as waste management and extensive environmental degradation. With a residential population of 10,000 people, the Municipalities come under huge pressure each summer season as over 100,000 tourists arrive. This flow of tourists in a short period of time exceeds the capacity of the Islands' environment, adding to the strain on fresh water, waste management and energy resources.

The AIPF is an initiative started in 2015 by friends of the Aeolian Islands, who want to give this fragile ecosystem the protection it deserves. We raise money from people from all around the world who care about the future of the Aeolian Islands. We use funds raised to give out grants to local environmental and sustainable initiatives.

To address these social and environmental challenges, the AIPF has worked with partners and funded projects to protect the land and sea, commissioned studies to engage the community and promote change, and established alliances to strengthen local voices on critical issues.

We do this so future generations can also love, enjoy and prosper from the Aeolians pristine seas and marine species, fertile soils and landscape, unique biodiversity and exceptional, natural beauty. By preserving our islands' natural beauty and resources, we contribute to the community's well-being and prosperity.

# OUR TEAM



**Ben Goldsmith**  
**Founder**

Ben is CEO of Menhaden Capital, a new energy and resources focused investment trust listed on the London stock exchange. Previously, in 2005 Ben founded WHEB, one of Europe's leading specialist sustainability-focused fund management businesses. Ben is also Chairman of the UK Conservative Environment Network and of the Goldsmith family's environment-focused philanthropic foundation, the JMG Foundation.



**Luca Del Bono**  
**Founder**

Luca Del Bono, born in Lipari Aeolian Islands, is a Anglo-Italian entrepreneur, is at the helm of ONDA, a platform serving a community of extraordinary people and places, embracing purpose-driven projects around the world.

Luca has developed and managed numerous hospitality ventures for over 20 years, more recently launching the South Kensington Club in London and La Macchia in Tuscany.

Previously, in 2000, Luca co-founded lifestyle company Quintessentially, spearheading the business development across multiple sectors within the service industry and in to new markets internationally.

Over the years, Luca has supported organisations such as Slow Food, Unicef and The Prince's Trust, embracing causes that he's passionate about. In 2015 with environmentalist Ben Goldsmith he co-founded the Aeolian Islands Preservation Fund, that have been dedicated to numerous impact projects across the archipelago. Luca has been honoured with the Medal of Merit from the Ministry of Environment for his outstanding environmental work. In 2018 the President of Italy invested Luca a knighthood, with the title of Cavaliere della Repubblica.



**Ambra Messina**  
**Executive Director**

Since she was a child she spent her summertime in Lipari island. She's a diver and she has always dreamt to give her contribution to preserve the marine and terrestrial heritage of the Aeolian Islands. After gaining her languages degree, she studied for a master's degree in international relations at Luiss University in Rome. She worked as coordinator for the Academy of Egypt in Rome, in the Egyptian Embassy and she spent a period working for the press office of the Italian Representation of the European Commission. Since June 2017 she's Coordinator of the Aeolian Islands Preservation Fund.



**Jade Brudenell**  
**Director – Network of Local Environment Funds**

Jade is the UK based director of the global preservation fund family. She acts as an alternate to Ben on the Steering Committee of the AIPF. She works closely with the local Directors, supporting them on a day to day basis. She also identifies synergies and best practice in strategy, fund raising, and implementation across the network. She and Ben are focused on finding opportunities to replicate the model and roll out new funds in different parts of the world. Her background is in marketing and investor relations, in the environmental investment sector.



## STEERING COMMITTEE

A steering committee comprising our most active donors meets regularly to oversee the grants process, and help direct strategy.

- Ben Goldsmith
- Luca Del Bono
- Cyril Blot-Lefevre
- Valerie Sadoun
- Cinzia Rutson
- Georgina Enthoven
- Adelin Coigny

## ADVISORY COUNCIL

A advisory council of local experts across our key topics, which assesses and advises on the grant proposals we receive.

- Enrico Navarra
- Mimma Iannello
- Rosi Mollica

“If you make it possible for people to help restore nature in their own backyard they’re much more likely to be receptive. I hope in due course that we can replicate this model in many places across the world.”

**Ben Goldsmith**  
Co-Founder, Aeolian Preservation Fund

# WORKING TOGETHER



**Message from Luca Del Bono**  
AIPF's founder

Legend has it that Ulysses arrived in the Aeolian islands to be granted the force of nature by Aeolus; all the power of the winds gave him the safe course to return home across the Mediterranean.

The Aeolian archipelago has always been an epicentre for world travellers, (Jules Verne wrote, "Journey to the centre of the Earth," with the finale of all adventures emerging in Stromboli!). Voyagers have found the nature of the islands incredibly diverse, mesmerising and captivating; for this we must protect what has been gifted to us and for the future generations to keep alive.

I was born on the island of Lipari; growing up among the beauty of the archipelago, island hopping, and enjoying the diversity of nature... Now while sadly a few too many buildings have been developed on some islands without control, (a government plan was introduced in the past couple of decades, only after harm was already caused in some areas), but worst still, is that the Sea is notably different since my childhood... crazily enough, there is no proper regulation to protect the oceans, (except for some fishing laws that are hardly respected or difficult to enforce due to the lack of resources).

It's been a wonderful revelation to be able to create the AIPF with my old friend Ben Goldsmith and other special friends that have believed in the mission to preserve this idyllic ecosystem. In just a few years considerable progress has been made to implement these programs that will revive what Mother Nature has granted us. In particular, with the objective

to enforce a Marine Protected Area, that is now in progress to be realised, that will allow the sea to replenish itself and be preserved over time.

The AIPF team managed by Ambra Messina and Ben's organisation led by Jade Brudenell, have done an amazing job in putting a program in effect, covering the initial phase that we'd set out, primarily focused in Land and Marine conservation. Our partners, Blue Marine, Sea Shepherd, Oceana, Mare Vivo among other admirable organisations, have been investing their expertise, resources and incredible passion to make our habitat a better place, by involving the local community and working together for future generations to enjoy the Aeolians the way I did when I was a child. We have a major responsibility to pass on the "baton", the way our ancestors did with us, yet we must do so with greater consciousness after the harm caused recently by an unethical and indiscriminatory approach, and for this I thank all the inspiring people that have participated and continue supporting the Aeolian Islands Preservation Fund, bringing our plans to life.



**Message from Ambra Messina**  
AIPF's Executive Director

My personal connection with the Aeolian islands and my love for its land and its sea has deep roots. It was here that I learned to scuba dive, discovering the extent of the beauty hidden beneath the surface of the sea. In 15 years, however, the underwater world I loved so dearly has deteriorated rapidly marine life is increasingly less rich. Unfortunately, it is becoming ever more common to see turtles and cetaceans in difficulty due to marine pollution and human carelessness.

The fund supports projects presented to it by local associations, as well as develops possible initiatives with this groups, it also brings in expert international organizations to support local capacity where necessary. Today I believe in the power of working together as a team, to sensitize the children who will soon be adults, and with the generous support of all of those different people who, without asking anything in return, believe and invest in the future of our islands.



**Message from Ben Goldsmith**  
AIPF's founder

I spent a week exploring these islands on holiday and was totally astounded by their beauty. I was delighted to partner up with Luca and friends to create the Aeolian Islands Preservation Fund, and include it in the family of local environment funds, that I have created together with a number of influential people who share my desire to protect the nature beauty of an area that they love.

I strongly believe we should aim not just to protect what's there, but to restore the abundance that once existed in these islands.



**Message from Rory Moore**  
(Blue Marine Foundation)  
AIPF partner

Blue Marine Foundation is working in the Aeolian Islands to support sustainable fishing, restore fish stocks and protect rare marine habitats and species, thanks to our partnership with the AIPF. The passion, creativity, skill and

drive of the Fund sets the bar high for effective conservation efforts in the Mediterranean. Thanks to the AIPF team, a sustainable future for the archipelago has become a reality.



**Message from Adelin Coigny**  
(SmileWave Fund) AIPF donor  
and committee member

If you are worried about the future of Mediterranean Sea, into ocean conservation, or simply care about marine biodiversity, please support the AIPF if you can! Smilewave Fund has been supporting and working in collaboration with this great team of people in order to protect marine areas, raise awareness and all this, in the interest of local communities and of course biodiversity.

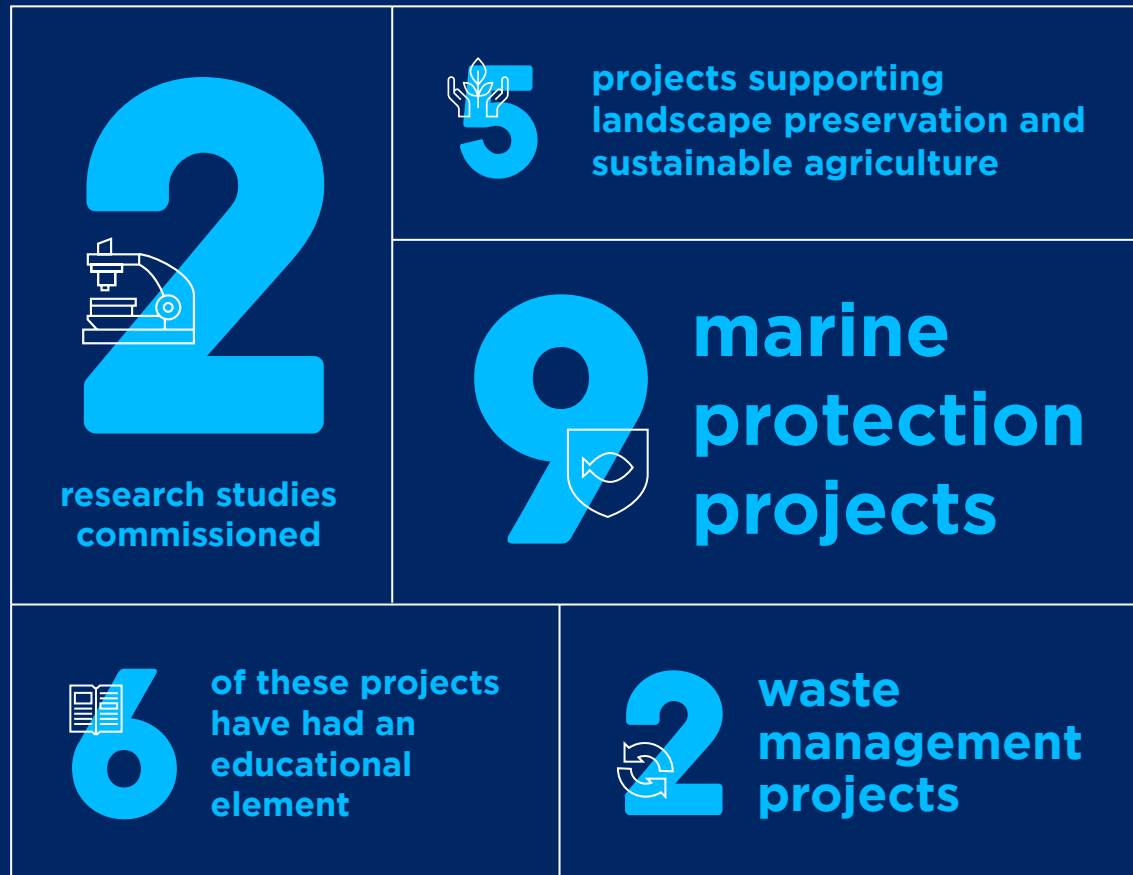


**Message from Mimma Iannello**  
(Teacher and owner of La Gorgonia diving center in Lipari)  
Advisory Council

The Aeolian archipelago has unique characteristics that make it rich in marine, coastal and terrestrial biodiversity. The protection of this wonderful archipelago is absolutely necessary and the AIPF represents a significant resource that has been operating in the territory for years, implementing educational actions that involve the Aeolian community. Their initiatives increase local sensitivity towards the environment and promote sustainable behaviors. Their role in the coordinated action with the schools is particularly relevant, promoting environmental best practice with the next generation.

# AIPF IN NUMBERS

18 projects funded in the following areas of interest:



**100,000 plastic bottles** recycled by the eco-compactor

**25 fishermen** engaged to fish more sustainably

**130 km of illegal FADs** (fishing aggregating devices) removed from the sea

**4000kg of discarded fishing nets** recovered and recycled

**10,000 reusable bags** distributed to replace plastic shopping bags in local markets.

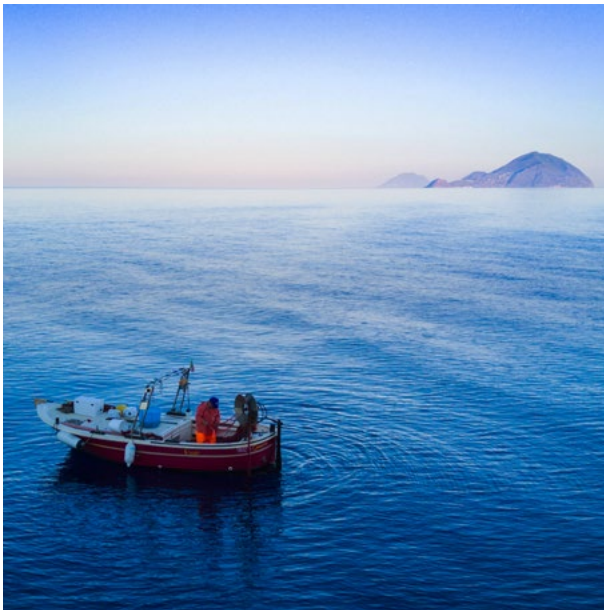


## PROJECTS

# MARINE PROTECTION:

## PROTECTING THE AEOLIAN MARINE ENVIRONMENT AND SUPPORTING ARTISANAL FISHING

The AIPF together with BLUE Marine Foundation (BLUE), is working to support sustainable fishing, restore fish stocks, reduce pollution and protect rare marine habitats and species. This project is overseen by two experienced marine biologists: Rory Moore, project manager at BLUE, and Giulia Bernardi, local project coordinator.



### Key activities to date include:

→ A **multimedia awareness raising campaign** was carried out among key stakeholders from the fishing, tourism and local business sectors stressing the importance of preserving our sea and promoting the sustainable use of marine resources. This included a recreational boating code of conduct, infographics about the aeolian marine ecosystem, a guide to responsible local fish consumption.



→ A **launch event** where the Ministry of Environment, Land, and Sea publicly announced their support for developing a marine protected area (MPA) in the Aeolian Islands

→ A **think-tank** to highlight the issues of marine conservation related to the Aeolian sea to our international colleagues including Lonely WhaleFoundation, Oceana and Sea Shepherd.

→ A **marine protection education programme** with local NGO Marevivo, aimed at inspiring the next generation to be guardians of their own waters. Students are involved in practical activities to let them discover their environment and then encouraged to observe, reflect, and report these concepts in a creative way.

→ The **sea-bed clean up week** in partnership with local diving centres to remove lost fishing nets and other rubbish from the Aeolian seabed.





## PROJECTS



# MARINE PROTECTION:

## PROTECTING THE AEOLIAN MARINE ENVIRONMENT AND SUPPORTING ARTISANAL FISHING

→ A voluntary **'code of conduct'** developed with local fishermen **to promote low-impact, sustainable and responsible fishing**. We have already involved 22 fishermen from Salina and Stromboli, and are now working to expand this network to other islands.



→ **Providing tangible infrastructure and equipment** in the form of reusable, insulated fish boxes to improve quality of fish and reduce polystyrene waste, and vastly improve the economics of artisanal fishing.

→ **Two research projects to gain a deeper understanding of the Aeolian marine habitats**, e.g. Posidonia, and the dynamics of the local fishery in collaboration with the Anthon Dohrn Zoological Station and Aquastudio research centre. This vulnerable habitat is particularly sensitive and protected by European rules and the research could be integral to a future MPA designation.



→ **A campaign to make Salina the first island in Italy to be free from plastic shopping bags** by distributing thousands of 'More FishLess Plastic' reusable bags. According to the Italian law, single use bags must be both biodegradable and compostable. The very thin bags for fruit and vegetables (thickness under 15 microns) must be biodegradable and compostable. The reusable plastic bags must have specific thickness requirements and be made of recycled plastic and must be affixed to the manufacturer's identifying elements and suitable statements to certify the possession of the thicknesses and other legal requirements. We provided cotton bags for life, and printed posters encouraging people to reuse these instead of taking plastic ones.

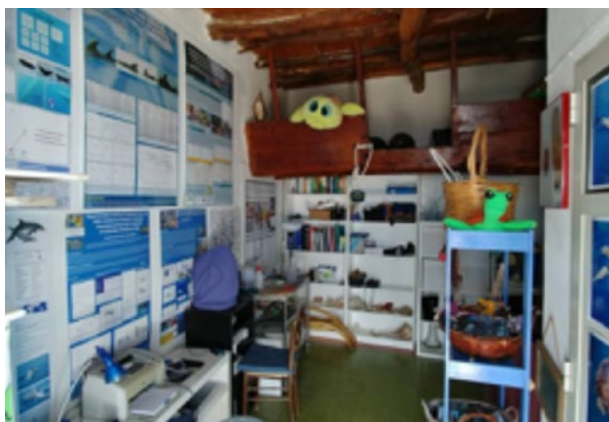


## PROJECTS

# MARINE PROTECTION:

## PROTECTING THE AEOLIAN MARINE ENVIRONMENT AND SUPPORTING ARTISANAL FISHING

→ **Supporting the renovation of a rescue and rehabilitation centre for sea turtles** in Filicudi with Filicudi Wildlife Conservation. The aim is to ensure the conservation of endangered loggerhead turtles. The centre also offers educational courses for local children and provide information about the Aeolian marine environment to visiting tourists.



→ **“The sea of time” workshop for children**, focusing on sea pollution, presented at the “Festa di Teatro EcoLogico” in Stromboli, dedicated to the children of the island, who collected plastic waste from the beach that has been used for the final performance. The aim of the project was to raise awareness of the problem of marine litter and to ensure future adults respect the place where we live, the environment and our islands.

→ **International fishermen exchange event:** “Responsible, small-scale fishing: Win-win, low-impact, sustainable models that boost fish stocks and improve livelihoods”

We organized this in Salina where fishermen from five small-scale European fisheries met to discuss their experiences for the first time. Aeolian fishermen hosted their counterparts from the Italian marine protected areas (MPAs) of Egadi Islands, Punta Campanella, Torre Guaceto, and Lyme Bay, UK who presented various initiatives from their local regions, showing how responsible, small-scale fisheries are beneficial to the local fishing economy and the marine environment.

→ **A diving mission recovered more than four tons of ghost nets**, in collaboration with Healthy Seas, Ghost Fishing, the local divers and fishermen. The nets will be recycled and transformed into sustainable textiles for fashion houses across the globe.



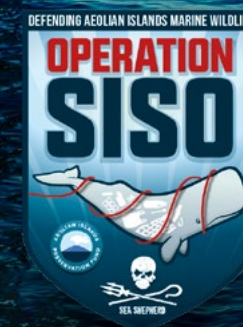


## PROJECTS

# MARINE PROTECTION: TACKLING ILLEGAL FISHING



→ Sea Shepherd ran **Operation SISO**, which focused on tackling illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. It was in collaboration with Lipari's Coast Guard, Milazzo's Revenue and Customs Authorities, and the artisanal fishermen and it collected 52 fads (Fishing Aggregating Devices) and 100 kilometers of polypropylene line in the Aeolian Islands.





## PROJECTS

# LANDSCAPE PROTECTION

Sustainable tourism must be promoted to ensure long term benefits to the economy. The tourism industry will only flourish, if we protect the natural assets (pristine waters, impressive volcanos, stunning landscapes and biodiversity) which draw people to visit the Aeolians in the first place. We look to protect the landscapes with their rich soils, and promote local produce.

→ Local course demonstrating how to build the dry stone walls that are typical of the Aeolian terraced landscape, with Dotteolie and CNR-ISAC, involving theoretical and practical modules on construction on dry stone walls to help recover and protect the cultural and traditional landscape of the Aeolian Islands. The aim of the Course is to raise awareness of the importance of dry stone walls and terraces to protect against hydrogeological risk and mitigation, but also for their role in the protection of biodiversity and in the improvement of soil fertility. The recovery and maintenance of the terraced landscape could prove to be strategically important for long-term territorial planning, aimed at reducing the negative effects of climate change by promoting the use of traditional techniques in an integrated and sustainable way.



→ We worked with local partner Fondo Ambiente Italiano to clearing the ancient pathways in Panarea, enabling visitors greater access to it's remarkable mountain landscapes. Encouraging visitors to explore what our islands have to offer can lead to a higher level of respect, and a better quality of tourism.



## PROJECTS

# SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Local agriculture is a resource deserving to be protected and promoted. Before the onslaught of tourism, the Aeolian Islands used to be self-sufficient. Salina still remains a rural island where you can find agro-biodiversity, ancient seeds and traditional cultivations. Tourism has changed the originality of the islands and caused the abandonment of farming and now the islands' food supplies depend totally on imports.

→ For the second year running, we supported a project called 'Edible Gardens', carried out by international NGO Slow Food. It was an educational programme for schools, to encourage children to take an interest in local produce and sustainable agriculture. After supporting the first edition launched in Salina, the edible gardens spreaded all over the islands, from Panarea, to Filicudi, to Lipari and we are supporting a new project called "the colors of sweet" including lessons involving an Honey producer of « Black Sicilian Bees » who will give one hive (wooden house) to each school, to be painted and returned to the manufacturer, in order to start the production. The children will discover the productive process, tasting the results.





## PROJECTS

# WASTE MANAGEMENT

The road to optimise the system of waste collection and achieve self-sufficiency in waste disposal, organise staff and facilities, and to ensure high standards is still long and the aim is to train citizens about recycling and ecology and sensitize them through concrete initiatives.

→ EmergenSea educational Campaign with Marevivo providing eco-compactors for plastic bottles in busy market areas and schools to reduce pollution and raise awareness of the benefits of recycling. In Lipari in three months 50,000 plastic bottles have been recycled thanks to the Marevivo initiative, to the eco-compactor that we funded and thanks to the awareness of the local community. The bottles would cover the distance of 17 km, equal to the circumnavigation of Stromboli island.





# GET INVOLVED

Thank you to all our members and everyone who supported the AIPF projects in 2018. Your support helps to look after the land and sea we all love.

With the support of passionate and generous individuals, the Aeolian Islands really can hold onto and improve upon their tremendous beauty and can be a model for the sustainable management of islands.

## PARTNERS

Thank you to all our corporate partners and supporters who generously supported us. We couldn't do it without you!



## PARTNERSHIPS

We are proud of the support received by international and local partners who have been involved, raised funds on our behalf or spread the word, and shared our passion.



## GRANTS

We're privileged to be able to work together with local, Italian and international NGOs and associations. Their expertise, dedication and commitment to the cause provides us with a source of inspiration, ideas and energy.



Stazione  
Zoologica  
Anton Dohrn  
Napoli



## SPECIAL THANKS:

Municipality of Lipari

Municipality of Santa Marina

Municipality of Malfa

Municipality of Leni

Coast Guard

Ministry for Environment, Land and Sea

## SUPPORTERS & FUNDRAISERS

A special thank goes to all our supporters and fundraisers thanks to whom these projects to preserve our beloved islands have been made possible.

# SISTER ORGANIZATIONS

Inspired by the success of the Ibiza Preservation Fund, one of our co-founders, Ben Goldsmith, is developing a toolkit to replicate the model around the world.

The aim is to raise money from people and businesses that have a strong connection to a place. The “fund family” consists of the Ibiza Preservation Fund, Mallorca Preservation Fund, Menorca Preservation Fund, Cyclades Preservation Fund, St Vincent & the Grenadines Environment Fund, Lankan Environment Fund and the Barbados Environmental Conservation Fund.

**Get in touch with us if you have an idea for an area where this model could be successfully rolled out.**





# FINANCIAL REPORT

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AMOUNT RAISED IN 2018:

**£112,427**

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AMOUNT SPENT IN 2018 (GRANTS):

**£108,554**

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AMOUNT SPENT IN 2018 (OTHER EXPENSES):

**£24,277**



# CONTACT US

We love hearing from people who love the Aeolian Islands environment as much as we do.

## EMAIL US:

[info@aeolianpreservationfund.org](mailto:info@aeolianpreservationfund.org)  
[ambra@aeolianpreservationfund.org](mailto:ambra@aeolianpreservationfund.org)

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