



## The **BICREF-RMSR AWARD:**

### *Inspiring mariners to go for the environmental challenge*

The Biological Conservation Research Foundation, BICREF non-profit ngo, focuses on encouraging first hand assistance to biodiversity conservation by its volunteers and projects.

The BICREF-RMSR Award for the Best Dolphin and Whale Sightings recorded was set-up in 2000 as a means to increase local and international awareness of the vulnerable cetacean species in the Central and Southern Mediterranean Region. This BICREF Middle Sea Race Project aims at assisting the long-term Cetacean Research and Conservation Project ongoing in Malta led by BICREF in collaboration with the Conservation Biology Research Group of the University of Malta (CBRG-UM). Prof Adriana Vella, PhD (Cambridge) has pioneered and sustained leadership in this local to regional conservation research effort since 1996.

The BICREF's Award project is possible through the collaboration of the Royal Malta Yacht Club. The BICREF's Rolex Middle Sea Race Project is one of the activities undertaken within the Maltese Biological Conservation Research Project focusing on Cetaceans and their marine environment. Conservation Biology is the science that deals with the study of endangered species and habitats. It also deals with the study of natural resources and their sustainable use.

Planning and managing biodiversity and species survival in the long term is extremely difficult without the biological knowledge of the processes and dynamics of the species and habitats involved. Different techniques in conservation science have been developed in aid to protect vulnerable species through proper assessment and monitoring. As a bio-conservation specialist, Adriana Vella is involved in upgrading local knowledge of conservation biology and management working with other scientific researchers and volunteers from BICREF.

This Cetacean Conservation Research Project has already produced scientific results presented at local and international conferences. The accumulating and valuable scientific data may pave the way to more accurate local awareness and conservation management of legally protected species/habitats, such as dolphins and the sea life that sustains them. In

general Cetaceans' sightings records are already being forwarded to Adriana Vella by the AFM, local fishermen, leisure boat and sailing-boat users. This is usually done by either informing the AFM controls room through VHF radio, or contacting Prof. Vella directly on the following:

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Hamrun, Malta

WhatsApp/Mobile: +356 9942 9592

Emails: [adrianajvella@gmail.com](mailto:adrianajvella@gmail.com)

[bicref@gmail.com](mailto:bicref@gmail.com)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/bicref.malta/>

Transport Malta has also issued the following notice to assist ongoing conservation work:

LOCAL NOTICE TO MARINERS No 017 of 2022:  
<https://www.transport.gov.mt/include/filestreaming.asp?fileid=7419>

*Images of some of the Happy Winners of  
the BICREF-RMSR AWARD  
in previous years*





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