

## Press Release

### **HEREMA at the 14th Regional Growth Conference: Informing the public about the role of energy resources in regional development**

DATA R.C. survey records positive outlook towards hydrocarbon exploration in Western Greece, the Peloponnese, and the Ionian Islands

**Athens, 21 May 2026** – The **Hellenic Hydrocarbons and Energy Resources Management Company (HEREMA)** participated at the **14th Regional Growth Conference**, held on 19-21 May 2026 at the Conference and Cultural Center of the University of Patras.

Contributing to conference proceedings, HEREMA highlighted the need for responsibly leveraging domestic energy resources, with the aim of energy security and regional growth, and in terms of environmental protection and information of the public. In this context, **HEREMA CEO Aristofanis Stefatos** held a meeting on Wednesday, May 20th, with representatives of local media outlets from the regions of Western Greece, the Peloponnese, and the Ionian Islands. The **Ministry of Environment and Energy** was represented by the **Secretary General for Energy and Mineral Resources, Despoina Paliarouta**, reflecting the emphasis placed on direct, reliable and scientifically grounded information for local communities.

During the meeting, Mr. Stefatos presented the institutional role and responsibilities of HEREMA, Greece's national hydrocarbons program, the national development program for offshore wind farms, carbon capture and storage projects, as well as the overall framework within which these activities are progressing—in accordance with domestic and European legislation and international best practices.

On the same day, during the panel discussion ***“Exploration Activities and Growth: From Resource to Region,”*** the results of a recent public opinion survey were presented. The survey was conducted on behalf of HEREMA by DATA R.C. in the regions of Western Greece, the Peloponnese, and the Ionian Islands, aiming to record the views of citizens towards the exploration and potential production of hydrocarbons ahead of the exploratory drilling planned in Block 2 (NW Ionian Sea). Participating in the discussion of the survey findings were Mr. Stefatos; the **Deputy Regional Governor of Western Greece, Charalampos Bonanos**; the **Deputy Governor for Energy, Environment and Circular Economy of the Peloponnese Region, Anastasios Adamopoulos**; and **Theodora Kanellakopoulou of DATA R.C.** The discussion was moderated by **Theodoros Louloudis, editor of the newspaper Peloponnisos and President of the Achaia Chamber of Commerce.**

According to the results of the survey, there is **broad public support** for the exploration and potential production of hydrocarbons in Greece, with **71.4% of citizens expressing either very positive or positive views**. At the same time, two out of three respondents support exploration activities in their area of residence. The findings indicate that citizens associate the development of domestic energy resources with critical national and regional priorities—such as **energy security, economic growth, job creation, geopolitical upgrade for the country, and increased public revenues**. At the same time, respondents clearly identify the essential conditions for supporting such projects, namely **strict environmental monitoring, transparency, regular updates, and direct benefits for local communities**.

Commenting on the survey, Mr. Stefatos emphasized that the findings confirm the need for consistent and systematic dialogue with local authorities and meaningful information of the public, to convey how

the development of domestic energy resources can create significant opportunities not only for the country in general, but also its respective regions.

The contribution of HEREMA at the 14th Regional Growth Conference also included participation at another two discussions. Mr. Stefatos took part in the session **“Blue Growth: Sea and Economy – The Next Wave of Development,”** where he discussed the role of offshore energy projects in the further development of maritime economy. In addition, HEREMA Head of Geoscience, Efthimios Tartaras, participated at the panel **“The Role of Hydrocarbons in the New Energy Transition,”** elaborating on the importance of the hydrocarbon sector for energy security and stability of supply, as well as Greece’s position within the European and global energy landscape.

By participating at the Regional Growth Conference and engaging with representatives of local authorities and regional media, HEREMA affirmed its commitment to continuous communication with local communities. The goal is for public information to come first, to be data-based, and to clearly answer questions related to all three pillars of the Company’s activity, environmental protection, and regional growth prospects.

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#### **HEREMA Profile**

The Hellenic Hydrocarbons and Energy Resources Management Company (HEREMA) is a State-owned company and the competent authority in Greece for the planning, licensing, and management of key energy resources and technologies that will enable the country’s transition to a robust and sustainable energy system. The company’s mandate is to build a bridge to a carbon-free future that revolves around three strategic pillars: the exploration and production of Hydrocarbons; the development of Offshore Wind Farms (OWF); and the management of Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) and Underground Gas Storage (UGS) projects. In that capacity, HEREMA embarks on multi-faceted efforts to accelerate Greece’s energy transition and security.

#### **For further information:**

Please visit the official HEREMA website [herema.gr](http://herema.gr)

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