

## Marine ecosystem conservation

### Redeia and Asociación Amicos join forces to conserve and restore gorgonian forests in Galicia

The project will restore gorgonian populations —key to conserving the seabeds around the Atlantic Islands National Park— with the collaboration of local fishers and the direct participation of people with disabilities.

The initiative, designed to boost social integration and public awareness, is part of Redeia's Marine Forest Platform, a programme that supports the conservation and restoration of marine ecosystems through 2030.

**Boiro (A Coruña), 25 September 2025**

Redeia and Asociación Amicos have signed a collaboration agreement to restore and conserve marine biodiversity in the seabeds surrounding the Atlantic Islands Maritime-Terrestrial National Park, in Galicia's Rías Baixas. The one-year project, backed by nearly €65,000 in funding from Redeia, is framed within Redeia's **Marine Forest Platform**, which aims to protect and restore marine ecosystems of highest ecological value by 2030.

The agreement, already underway, includes pioneering actions in the Ría de Arousa (Arousa Estuary) area. Efforts will focus on **restoring around 200 gorgonians, accidentally captured during fishing activities**.

Fishers themselves collect the gorgonians and bring them to port, where they are transferred to the 'hospital' aquariums run by Asociación Amicos at the Ribeira Fishermen's association facilities. There, the Amicos team rehabilitates them before returning them to their natural habitat. This type of active restoration uses the 'badminton' method developed by the Institute of Marine Sciences of the Spanish National Research Council (ICM-CSIC). This process involves attaching gorgonians to natural stones to provide weight, allowing colonies to land upright when released from a boat. The project also includes scientific monitoring to assess long-term viability.

Gorgonians are key organisms in vulnerable marine ecosystems. Accidental capture reduces their populations, which harms marine biodiversity and threatens the sustainability of other species that rely on seabeds —such as shellfish, a critical resource for the local economy.

This initiative protects the environment and **benefits the artisanal fishing sector** by ensuring the long-term viability of resources and supporting more sustainable practices. Another key objective is to help preserve the natural and tourism value of the Rías Baixas, vital to the local economy.



*The 'badminton' method with gorgonians 1*

## Restoration and social value

**Social awareness is at the heart** of this initiative, with its most innovative feature being its inclusive approach: people with intellectual disabilities are directly involved in the scientific and technical tasks of marine restoration. In this way, the project highlights their ability to contribute to challenges faced by society as a whole. Specifically, 40 Amigos participants are directly engaged as environmental agents.

The project also includes a public awareness campaign on the importance of conserving marine ecosystems as refuges for native species and as allies in the fight against climate change. This campaign targets citizens in general and especially the fishing sector, whose involvement is vital. Around 10 fishers will receive training in marine conservation.

For Redeia, this collaboration reinforces its vision of sustainable business and its commitment to caring for oceans and coastal communities. Protecting marine ecosystems is essential for biodiversity, climate action, and society's future. This initiative brings together science, inclusion, and awareness to generate a real positive impact on ecosystems, people, and the economy.

The gorgonian restoration project in Galicia is part of Redeia's Marine Forest Platform, a strategic initiative to conserve marine habitats of highest ecological value. This is achieved through active and passive restoration backed by scientific validation, along with education and environmental awareness activities.

### **About Redeia**

Redeia is a global operator of essential and neutral infrastructure. Its mission is to guarantee electricity supply and connectivity while promoting a just ecological transition based on sustainability and contributing to social and territorial cohesion. The company operates five leading subsidiaries in the energy and telecommunications sectors, with activities in Spain and Latin America. Learn more: [www.redeia.com](http://www.redeia.com)

### **About Amicos**

Amicos is an association that creates opportunities and provides support for people with intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, or cerebral palsy, as well as for their families. A strong team of professionals works to ensure the inclusion of each individual as a full citizen and to foster a diverse community that is environmentally conscious and respectful of its heritage and culture.