

Adopted resolution

on Apigianias - Crete

The European Green Party protests against the Common Ministerial Decree No. 110956/3239/12-31-03 of the Greek Government regarding the attempted exploitation of an area of special ecological interest in Southeast of Crete, which is presently officially protected by numerous regulations.

The European Green Party also deprecates any complementary administrative acts of the Greek State for the fulfilment of this Decree.

The actual area named "Apigianias" (Municipality of Makri Gialos, Lassithi Department) has been officially described as protected forest area by the Greek State since 1988, whereas reforestation was started in 1993. The area includes a large portion of the seaside pine tree (*Pinus brutia*) forest that has been described as area of particular natural beauty. Parts of this site belong to the "Natura 2000" zone under the code number "GR4320005" named "Mount Thripti & surroundings". The whole site of "Apigianias" is classified in the same categories of habitats as those of the previously mentioned "Natura 2000" zone, as defined by the appendices of the European Direct 92/43.

Moreover, thanks to the continual protective management of the forest area of "Apigianias" by the local Forest Agency, the area has been acknowledged as one of the most significant forest reserve parks in Crete.

Below the main characteristics of the Common Ministerial Decree No. 110956/3239/12-31-03 of the Greek Government:

- Violation of the Greek and European legal framework (The Greek Constitution, The Law on Forest, the European Direction 92/43), as admitted by appropriate agents such as scientific consultants of the Greek State (Geotechnical Chamber of Greece), by public servants in the Local Forest Agency and by officers in the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Provocative concealment (aposiopesis) in the Ministerial Decree of terms such as "sustainability", "sustainable development", "ecosystem", "public - social benefit".
- Concession of the land and allowances for its exploitation, without any precedent Studies of Environmental Consequences. Thus, the concession includes the construction of a golf course up to an area of 630,000 square meters and a hotel up to an area of 70,000 square meters, which was promoted and decided for "Apigianias", without any precedent Studies of Environmental Consequences.

We request the Greek Government to withdraw the Common Ministerial Decree No. 110956/3239/12-31-03 because the realization of its objective will have terrible consequences on both the natural environment and the local communities.

Amongst those are:

- Extensive deforestation owing to the nature and the scope of the intended exploitation.
- Over exploitation of the water supplies in order to use water for the installation and maintenance of the golf course and hotel, in one of the most hot and arid regions of Southern Crete, already facing enormous problems in meeting current human needs for water consumption.
- Concurrent side effects of water supplies exploitation will be the amplification of desertification in the area of Mount "Thripti" and further brackishness of the relevant underground aquifers.
- Decline of the local agricultural economy based on olive oil production and much dependent on water thus further undermining and threatening the local community means of sustenance.
- Debasing of biotic and non-biotic parameters of the protected overall habitat of the "Natura 2000" zone under the code number "GR4320005" named "Mount Thripti & surroundings" and

consequently debasement of special habitats of protected and endangered species that live in the mountain's slopes, such as: *Gypaetus barbatus*, *Aquila chrysaetus*, *Gyps fulvus*.

The European Green Party thus strongly recommends that the Common Ministerial Decree No. 110956/3239/12-31-03 of the Greek Government should not be implemented and that further steps should be taken towards protecting the area named "Apigianias" (Municipality of Makri Gialos, Lassithi Department) from present and future exploitation.