



**MAX PLANCK INSTITUTE
FOR CHEMISTRY**



Honorary doctorate for fire ecologist

Greek University honors Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Johann Georg Goldammer for his fire ecological research

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For his significant contribution in fire ecology research in collaboration with Greek scientists and on an international level, Prof. Johann Georg Goldammer was awarded an honorary doctorate from the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Environment of the Aristotelion University of Thessaloniki, Greece. This award was also given in view of his successful work as chair of an independent committee commissioned by the Greek government to develop forward-looking perspectives for the management of landscape fires in Greece.



Rector of Aristotelion University, Professor Dr. Nikolaos Papaioannou, with Prof. Goldammer and the German Consul General in Thessaloniki, Sibylla Bendig.

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Prof. Goldammer heads the Global Fire Monitoring Center at the Max Planck Institute for Chemistry and Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg.

In his opening speech, the Rector of Aristotelion University, Professor Dr. Nikolaos Papaioannou, pointed out that fires in the world's forest and cultural landscapes, and in Greece in particular, are a significant and increasing problem for the environment and people. He welcomed Professor Goldammer as a new member of the university family, who has dedicated his entire scientific life to fire ecology research.

In his eulogy, Prof. Dr. Alexandros P. Dimitrakopoulos, Head of the Chair of Wildland Fire Science, emphasized that Goldammer had developed important science-based methods for the prevention of fires and the rehabilitation of fire-damaged landscapes. His focus has always been the linking of scientific principles with the requirements of practical implementation.

Professor Thekla Tsitsoni, Head of the School of Forestry and Natural Environment at the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Environment, emphasized during the presentation of the certificate that the award of the honorary doctorate was a particularly memorable occasion. Because the last award of an honorary doctorate was 25 years ago to Bartholomew I, the Greek Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople.

Experience in managing landscape fires

Johann G. Goldammer established the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC) in 1998 as an institution serving the interface between science and politics. Based on this experience in the international arena, the Greek government commissioned Goldammer in 2018 to set up and lead an independent scientific commission. This should develop forward-looking perspectives for the management of landscape fires in Greece. In February 2019, Goldammer and his team of Greek scientists submitted the strategic concept to the Greek government and parliament.

In his lecture "Cultural Landscapes and Fire in Transition: Challenges for Society and Transdisciplinary Science" Goldammer showed the importance of interdisciplinary research at the Max Planck Institute for Chemistry that addresses the increasing problems of vegetation fires in Greece and worldwide.

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