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Reactions for the fire protection works in Schinias

28 June 2021



Not in the fire protection it destroys

11 environmental organizations call on the General Secretariat for Civil Protection to immediately stop the forest fire protection works within the Schinias - Marathon National Park and to cooperate with the National Park Management Agency and the competent Forestry Office, ecological integrity of the rare ecosystem.

Environmental organizations **ANIMA, Arctouros, Archelon, Hellenic Society of Environment and Culture, Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature, Hellenic ORNITHOLOGICAL Society, Society for the Protection of Prespa, Kallisto, Greenpeace, MEDASSET, WWF Greece**, express their complete opposition to it, as they claim. without a plan and care for the protection of the forest ecosystem, execution of forest fire protection works within **of the National Park Schinias - Marathon on 14 and 23 June 2021** by decision of the General Secretariat for Civil Protection.



In a joint statement, environmental organizations clarify:

"On May 10, 2021, declared a state of special civil protection mobilization 18 areas of Attica by decision of the Secretary General of Civil Protection and with the aim of "protecting the life and property of citizens, infrastructure, as well as the natural environment, due to the threatened risk of forest fires". Part of the area within the boundaries of the Municipality of Marathon is designated as a National Park and is protected by European Directive 92/43 / EEC. Especially **the famous forest of Koukounaria is a priority habitat (2270 * "Dunes with forests of Pinus pinea and / or Pinus pinaster") and its protection requires specific handling to ensure ecological integrity and ecosystem regeneration.**

»Despite the fact that the Management Body of the Schinias National Park Marathon of Ymittos and SE Attica submitted specific proposals for mild works for the purpose of fire protection, in order to protect the sensitive habitats, these were not taken into account by GGP during the design and execution of tasks. As can be seen from photos and data of the Managing Authority, from the interventions of the contractor's machines have "Small pine trees were uprooted and destroyed and all pine trees, regardless of age, have been uprooted to a height of 3m."



The organizations point out that the natural regeneration of the extremely sensitive habitat of pine cones in the sand dunes, is the biggest and chronic problem of the National Park.

"Without planning and respect for the ecosystem, the intervention of the subsoil deforestation machines with a destroyer prevents any natural regeneration of the pine cone, while **the branching of green branches of tall trees, estimated 45-55 years old**, raises serious issues of their future vitality and exacerbates the problem.

»**It is undeniable that the fire protection of the country is an urgent need** and a critical condition for the protection of the life and property of all of us as well as the natural environment. The main pillar of fire protection and prevention of forest fires is the management of forest areas and fuel. **However, this should be done in a coordinated manner, in a timely manner, always taking into account the health of forest ecosystems, especially rare ones.** and more sensitive to surgery. We must emphasize that protected areas are important tools for the conservation of habitats and species, but at the same time they contribute substantially to the sustainable development and prosperity of local communities and the country in general. Delayed interventions within the firefighting period, without the consent of the bodies responsible for the environmental protection of Schinias National Park and in excess of the relevant legislation, serve neither the fire protection nor the sustainable management of important ecological areas.



»The forestry works of fire protection that took place inside **Schinias National Park at June 14 and 23** raise serious doubts about their legality under national and EU law and about the power of the GATT to issue similar forest management decisions (especially protected areas) without the co-operation of the competent authorities and in violation of the forest protection law. It should be noted that the same applies to similar operations within other protected areas, such as **Sounio National Park**, which also falls under the responsibility of the Managing Authority ".

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