



PM Tsipras calls on Max Planck research professor to set up wildfire study committee

Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras invited Max Planck Institute researcher Johann Georg Goldammer to set up a committee under the aegis of the UN-affiliated Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC) to investigate the factor that led to the Mati wildfire tragedy and propose measures to prevent such events from recurring, in a phone conversation on Thursday.

Tsipras said that he wanted the future committee to investigate facts and produce a report with necessary changes and policies Greece should adopt to prevent such deadly catastrophes in the future. He added that the move aimed at excluding any possibility of political influence and biased findings.

The prime minister said Dr Goldammer accepted the invitation initially, and has agreed they will jointly announce the details for a committee shortly. The committee will also make use of Greek scientists in relevant fields, while Tsipras said he personally guaranteed that "this committee will receive every necessary support and necessary data from all state agencies."

The Max Planck Institute for Chemistry in Mainz, according to its site, "aims at an integral understanding of chemical processes in the Earth system, particularly in the atmosphere and biosphere." Dr Goldammer also heads the Fire Ecology research group at the University of Freiburg, which is responsible for the GFMC.

The GFMC, according to its site, helps "reduce the negative impacts of vegetation fires (wildland fires) on the environment and humanity; and advance(s) the knowledge and application of the ecologically and environmentally benign role of natural fire in fire-dependent ecosystems, and sustainable application of fire in land-use systems."

Dr Goldammer had been interviewed this month by the Athens-Macedonian News Agency (ANA).