

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2186/09

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to the Commission

Subject: The National Park of East Macedonia-Thrace in the Republic of Greece: Keramoti Breeding Heronry, East Keramoti Lagoon, Mangana Beach

The National Park is under threat due to the non-compliance of the new Ministerial Decree (October 2008) with the existing pSCI, SPA and/or Ramsar boundaries.

The Keramoti Breeding Heronry: The peninsula in the gulf of Keramoti which has a dune character (habitats of the Natura Directive 92/43/EEC¹) has been reduced from an A zone to a construction area of Keramoti. An illegal shipyard is causing incredible pollution. A breeding colony of herons in the small pine forest that is also the main winter night roost of endangered heron species and the world endangered Pigmy Cormorant is in danger.

The East Keramoti Lagoon: This important lagoon in the east of Keramoti has been characterised as Zone B while all other major lagoons in the park are A Zone and the outstanding riparian forest areas at the eastern end of Keramoti have even been excluded totally from the high conservation status – both habitats are priority habitats under the EU Natura Directive. The enlargement of the housing area of Keramoti will cause the loss of the unique riparian forest and the coastal dunes. An illegal garbage dump is located in the northern part of the lagoon, draining directly into the lagoon!

The Mangana Beach: Very valuable salt marshes and coastal sand dunes at the Mangana beach are excluded from the higher conservation status because of the development of tourism infrastructure and housing areas. Already in the interim ministerial decree from 1996, parts were excluded. Now even larger areas are unprotected, these areas are priority habitats of the EU Natura Directive and still very important wetland bird populations breed and stay there over winter.

How will the Commission prevent the deterioration of the European natural heritage located at the Keramoti Breeding Heronry, the East Keramoti Lagoon and the Mangana Beach in the National Park of East Macedonia-Thrace in the Republic of Greece?

¹ OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7.