

To European Bank of Investments ... <complaints@eib.org>

Gentlemen,

EIB has agreed to finance antiflood management of the ancient river Erasinos in the Municipality of Markopoulo, in East Attica Prefecture. 30 to 35 Km from Athens center in an unspoiled rural area.

No need for such a public work is necessary since the area has no inhabitants and only limited and declining agricultural activities. Public laws protect the area along the entire length of Erasinos River from any human interventions (PL 4559/2018, and Presidential Decree 199/2003).

River Erasinos ends in NATOURA 2000 area of Vravrona (code GR3000004), next to the ancient archeological site of Vravrona and the temple of Vravronia Artemis and its Museum.

The Ministry of Infrastructures and Transport has signed a contract with a Constructor who has started large scale interventions in the area without the written permissions from the Ministry instances. This is acknowledged in an official letter in response to a series of questions addressed to them. In addition, no agreement was obtained by the Archeological Instance (Ephorate) of East Attica, as law necessitates. Most important without a Presidential Decree which must describe and set the limits and the dimensions of the river bangs and its natural flooding areas. The PD was ordered by the Council of State and it is pending!

Citizens of the area used legally permitted actions to uncover all illegal actions taken by the Ministry and the Constructor. They are as follows:

- Send legal complaint to all responsible for the initiation of works without the necessary legal permissions as Law demands
- Made clear by a letter addressed to the Minister of Infrastructures and Transport Mr Kostantinos Karamanlis, the relevant Instances of the Ministry and the Constructor, describing all their illegal actions. Minister is warned that he is personally responsible - irrespective if due to ignorance, acceptance, or even encouragement - for any damage in the area, untouched for thousands of years. Accompanying pictures of the area demonstrated beyond any doubt the damage imposed already to the river ecosystems
- A legal complaint was put to the Office of the Public Prosecutor for the Environment describing all the actions of the Ministry, its Instances and the Constructor denying the Law and the unrecoverable damage that have already caused
- Asked the Police Station of the Markopoulo Municipality to demand from the Constructor to produce all the legal papers proving its right to start interventions in the area. In case of negation, inability or any other excuse, Constructor should be forced to leave the area and become legally responsible for the caused damage
- Issued a Press Release describing all illegal actions and the unacceptable results in the area that the antiflood works will have on the protected areas of Erasinos River, NATOURA 2000 of Vravrona, and the local ecosystems. The PR was co-signed by 45 environment friendly associations from all over Greece. Greek daily newspapers relayed articles based on the content of the PR informing the public of irrecoverable damage caused already by the public administration and the Contractor both failing to align with the provisions of the Law
- A public Press Conference was organized (using telepresence) to inform the public of actions of the Ministry and the Constructor violating the Law

All the above prove that EIB is committing a memorable and grave mistake by agreeing to finance the Erasinos antiflood public work, since the area remains practically the same and unchanged with no human intervention for more than 3000 years. Yes, 3000 years or more.

We urge EIB to take note of all illegal actions committed so far and to reexamine EIB's decision to finance an unnecessary, extremely expensive and – we dare to characterise - environmentally criminal project.

And a final question: What about the promotion and support of the “Nature Based Solutions” EIB and EU have both endorse and promote as a fundamental and uncompromisable guideline?

Dimitrios Sotiriou, retired assoc. prof. of Medical Physics, School of Medicine, Uni of Athens

Aeglis 38, 190 03 Markopoulo (Chamolia Vravronos), tel. + 30 69 72 86 77 96

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Selected supporting references:

1. Press Release announcement
https://attikoparko.blogspot.com/2021/05/blog-post_12.html
2. Article of influential Greek daily KATHIMERINH on Erasinos River
https://attikoparko.blogspot.com/2021/05/blog-post_8.html
3. Public event in favor of Erasinos River integrity
<https://attikoparko.blogspot.com/2021/04/25.html>
4. Press Release on Erasinos River damage
https://attikoparko.blogspot.com/2021/04/blog-post_9.html
5. Announcement of the letter addressed to minister mr. Kostas Karamanlis etc. for unacceptable actions against Erasinos River environmental wellbeing
https://attikoparko.blogspot.com/2021/03/blog-post_8.html

More information and original documents are available on demand.

For more information pls write to Dimitrios Sotiriou using dimitriosotiriou2@gmail.com