

01 – Tool for the environmental self-assessment of tourist accommodation

Environment and tourism legal context in Europe

Date: 05.04.2023

Partner organisation: AidLearn, GAL Molise, MCE, Sud Concept.



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Introduction

Under the European "Green Deal," new European strategies and legislation lead the tourism sector into the green transition of the whole sector. Making tourism more environmentally friendly goes hand in hand with the revision and implementation of several ongoing legislative initiatives relating to environmental protection and climate change. This goes from a healthier food system to a safe and environmentally friendly transport.

In 2021, the European Commission made a series of legislative proposals to achieve climate neutrality in the EU by 2050 and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030, compared with 1990. This "green transition" impacts the public and private sector tourism on numerous and various aspects, and the EU strategies and legislations concerned are abundant, creating a complex compendium.

Tourism and Environmental law

Tourism professionals should be aware of the relevant legislation in Europe and in their own country¹. It will help them learn about the environmental requirements, establish measures to prevent or minimize possible negative effects on their surroundings, and better inform their visitors.

In Greece, where tourism has been a growing sector for decades, environmental strategy and respect for natural resources were not always a priority. However, this is changing due to three main elements:

- The European environmental law, which should be transposed and implemented in Greece since the country's accession to the EU in 1981.
- The new demand from visitors for more sustainability and environmental respect.
- The COVID-19 pandemic and the increase in local tourism and eco-tourism.
- Additionally, there is an increasing awareness among professionals about the link between the lack of environmental protection and the low efficiency and competitiveness of our tourism activity.

It is worth noting that many areas in Greece, which experienced a significant population decline, particularly in rural areas during the 1950s and 1960s, have managed to maintain and increase their active population through tourism development. Typical examples include island areas such as the Dodecanese, the Cyclades, and others. However, in some areas, tourism has evolved into a "monoculture", leading to the entire economic, productive, and social structure of these areas depending solely on it. Concentrating a large number of visitors in small geographical areas for a short period of time creates multifaceted problems

¹ see: The regulation of tourism activity in Europe - https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/business-portal/understanding-legislation/regulation-tourism-activity-europe_en



related to the resilience of the environment and the capacity of the infrastructure, ultimately impacting the way of life of the locals.

While some relevant measures such as "Green Tourism" or "Green Business" have been adopted since 2008, there is still a need for public awareness and education.

Objective of this report

This report intends to provide you with an **overview of the trends in terms of strategies and legislation** within the main issues covered by the project EcoHosting.net. **It is not a comprehensive compilation of EU legislation** but should help you better understand the present and future framework and constraints for tourism activities.

It should be clear that the trends of Tourism strategies that is impacting tourism professionals are tackling the specific challenges of climate mitigation and adaptation, limiting pressures on biodiversity, and preserving water resources.

The strengths of tourist destinations will lean on the quality of their natural resources, cultural heritage and their potentiality to give customers a unique and authentic experiences.

Tourism professionals have a key role in this development, in strong collaboration with local authorities.

Reminder:

The EU legislation includes:

- Regulations (with direct implementation in the Member States)
- Directives (the precise implementation of which remains the responsibility of the Member States)

Prior to legislation, adopted by the Council of the EU and the European Parliament, the European commission is developing Strategies, Plans, Communication and proposals, that are all orientation documents which are not binding.



Waste management

European context

- **Main European policy provisions**

The Waste Framework Directive is the EU's legal framework for treating and managing waste in the EU. It introduces the "waste hierarchy". To prevent and reduce the impact of waste on human health and on the environment, this "waste hierarchy" gives priority to prevention (non-production of waste), preparing for re-use, recycling, treatment and, as latest solution, disposal².



Figure 1- [European Commission](#)

Certain categories of waste require specific approaches and the EU has many laws to address different types of waste (eg. Construction waste, Packaging waste, End of life vehicles, Hazardous waste, etc.) or specific methods of treatment (eg. Landfill).

² See: Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC [EUR-Lex - 32008L0098 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

For instance, the EU Directive on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment aims at fighting the Single-use plastics and makes all plastic packaging reusable or recyclable by 2030³.

- **Waste prevention & circular economy**

Under the European Green Deal, a new "green development model" is proposed with the production of products and services with fewer resources and more "green resources", while minimizing or even zeroing waste at all stages of production, but also after the end of product's life. This is because not only does waste have a negative impact on the environment, climate, and human health, it also has a negative impact on the economy as it results in the loss of valuable materials.

In this line, the European Commission created a **Circular Economy Action Plan**⁴ which focuses on the prevention of waste generation and on the promotion of reuse and recycling of waste.

The plan fixes objectives for recycling: for instance, target recycling rates for plastic are 40% by 2025 and 55% by 2030; for wood, it's 25% by 2025 and 30% by 2030; and paper and cardboard are set at 75% by 2025 and 85% by 2030.

Additionally, whilst not yet legally binding, it encourages food waste to be reduced by 30% by 2025 and 50% by 2030 in accordance with the United Nations' development goals.

- **Specific waste management policy in the field of tourism**

The European Commission released the Best Environmental Management Practice in the Tourism section in 2016. Whilst this is not a legally binding document, it strongly suggests that the sector focuses on reducing waste generation, reusing when possible, having a waste sorting system set up, and recycling sorted waste.

This approach is also pertinent from an economic standpoint as for many types of waste accommodations pay twice for it: at acquisition and disposal.

- **Current reforms**

In 2022, the Commission proposed a Circular Economy Package II, which main objective is to ensure for consumers reusable packaging options and, get rid of unnecessary packaging⁵.

- **General Sources**

- [European Environment Agency](#)

³ See [Directive \(EU\) 2019/904 of the European Parliament and th... - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

⁴ See the [new Circular Economy Action Plan](#) 2020

⁵ [Directive on single-use plastics](#) 2019 and [Directive on plastics bags](#) 2015



- [Best Environmental Management Practice in THE TOURISM SECTOR](#)
- [Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns](#)

The Greek context

According to the Greek legislation, waste management should be carried out without endangering human health and without harming the environment. Without creating a danger to water, air, soil, plants or animals, without disturbance caused by noise or odour; and without adversely affecting the landscape or sites of particular interest.

Additionally, the so called '**polluter pays**' principle, according to which waste management costs need to be paid by the original waste producer and the current or previous waste holders, lead responsible persons or businesses to reduce the waste produced they have to manage themselves or to assign to specialised agencies. Of course, this responsibility depends on the actual technically feasible and economically viable solutions!

A National Waste Prevention Programme was approved by the Ministerial Council in June 2021 (Act of Ministerial Council no. 11 of 29th April 2022, OGG 83 A). It targets a better information of the public and fixes waste reduction targets for specific streams. Catering sector and restaurants and food services are covered by this programme.

- **About reduction of plastic waste**

Greece holds the top spot in Europe in terms of per capita use of plastic bag! However, since 2018, Greece has enacted the EU legislation whereby consumers are obliged to pay an extra cents per plastic bag. The aim is to reduce the number of bags per consumer to 90 per year per person in the next two years, and to 40 by 2025.

In 2021, Greece banned the single-use plastics including cutlery, plates, straws, styrofoam containers and cups, beverage stirrers, and cotton swabs, as well as all types of products that decompose into microplastics.

The government has set out two main goals of reducing usage by 30% by the year 2024 %), compared to the year 2022, and by 60% by the year 2026, compared to the year 2022.

In addition, to reduce the use of some non-recyclable plastic package, warranty measure will be implemented for plastic bottles, and also aluminium cans, glass containers.



Good practice: Since 2015 in some Greek islands, such as the Northern Sporades island of Alonissos, tried to eliminate the use of plastic bags and launched the use of cloth alternatives instead. Sikinos was the first island in Greece to replace plastic straws with a bio-degradable alternative.

Δείτε:

[Το Νησί μας | Δήμος Αλοννήσου \(alonissos.gr\)](http://alonissos.gr)

[Η Σίκινος υποδέχεται τα βιοδιασπώμενα πλαστικά καλαμάκια \(energypress.gr\)](http://energypress.gr)

- **About reduction of food waste**

The National Waste Prevention Programme foresees, by 2030, a 30% reduction in food waste per capita compared with produced food waste of 2022 at retail and consumer level.

Good practice

Food Waste Prevention Greece has launched a national “Alliance for the Reduction of Food Waste” in 2020, an initiative of the Bouroume organization and AB Vassilopoulos. Under the auspices of the Ministry of Environment and Energy, the Alliance brings together key stakeholders such as professional and industry associations, companies from across the food supply chain, civil society organizations, and the academic and research community. 4 Around 35 stakeholders signed this voluntary cooperation agreement. In March 2021, the American College of Greece (ACG) presented the first report, which included a total of 57 actions, best practices, initiatives to prevent and reduce food waste.5 The second report for the year 2021 was issued in May 2022, with 69 actions presented, classified in 10 policy axes.

Δείτε: Bouroume Home (bouroume.gr)

- **Περισσότερα:**



- Ο Άτλας του πλαστικού – Το πλαστικό στην Ελλάδα #3 Νομοθεσία – Φίλιππος Κυρκίτσος, Δρ Περιβαλλοντολόγος, πρόεδρος της Οικολογικής Εταιρείας Ανακύκλωσης (Νοβ. 2021) <https://youtu.be/BbRZCAjK204>
- European Environment Agency, [Waste prevention country profile, Greece](#). 2003
- The EU directives on packaging waste were transposed into national law by means of various legislative acts: see [Νομοθεσία - \(ypen.gov.gr\)](#)



Water management

European context

It is very important to mention that the European Union treats water as a **non-commercial product**, and as a heritage that should be treated accordingly because “*Clean water is the driving force of life*”. It became clear during the last decades, with the visible impacts of climate change, that a lot of pressure is put on this good and that the amount of good quality soft water is limited.

- **Main European provision**
 - *The Water Framework Directive*

A global framework for a European water policy was established in 2000 with the **Water Framework Directive** (Directive 2000/60/EC) which aims for a good water status in general. Member States shall implement the measures necessary to prevent or limit the input of pollutants into groundwater and to prevent the deterioration of the status of all bodies of groundwater.

The objectives are:

- to enhanced protection and improvement of the aquatic environment and prevent or limit the input of pollutants into groundwater to prevent further pollution.
- to ensure the establishment a management of each river basin district, taken into account the status an aquatic ecosystem as a whole (and not only part of it, separately)
- to promotes sustainable water use based on a long-term protection of available water resources
- and contributes to mitigating the effects of floods and droughts.

- *Specific provisions*

Within this general framework, several specific directives were adopted to ensure that water is managed and preserved in the long-term and that aquatic ecosystems are protected (groundwater, drinking water, urban waste water, etc.). Among them, some may directly interest hotel and camping owners, especially those located close to natural surface water (sea, river, lake, etc.):



- Directive on **Bathing water** (Directive 2006/7/EC): to ensure the monitoring of the quality of bathing water to all natural surface water used for leisure across Europe. This ensures tourism professionals get information during the bathing season.
- Directive on **Floods** (Directive 2007/60/CE) is to manage flood risk and the risks floods pose to human health, economic activities and the environment. This Directive asks State members to monitor and inform the public on flood risk of all water courses and coastlines, evaluate and map them. They also have to organise measures to reduce the potential risk.

In addition, the Regulation on **Water Reuse** of May 2020 that aims to encourage and facilitate water reuse in the EU contributes to reducing water consumption and managing possible water scarcity. It focuses on water reuse in agriculture, but it generated some minimum requirements for water reuse and started the development of water reuse schemes. A review of the sector performed in 2017 by Water Reuse Europe, 787 schemes practising reuse were identified, distributed across 16 European countries. 11% were implemented for water reuse in recreational activities. This Regulation will be applied in all EU member States from June 2023.

- ***A better monitoring of water quality***

This legislation contributed to the improvement of national legislation and also led to an increase of monitoring of water quality and status, providing professionals with more information on water in their area:

- [The WISE](#) Water Information System for Europe provides data on European fresh and marine waters
- Interactive map to check the state of bathing water in your area: [State of bathing waters \(europa.eu\)](#)

- **Specific rules for water management in the field of tourism**

According to the **European Eco-label criteria for Tourism accommodation**, that are reserved to businesses engaged in the certification process, several criteria regarding water management should be considered. These criteria may provide guidelines for any hotel or camping owner wishing to better manage water.

<i>European Eco-label criteria for Tourism accommodation – Water management</i>
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- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The average water flow rate of the bathroom taps and showers shall not exceed 8,5 litres/minute (bathtubs, rain showers and massage-</i> |
|---|



showers are exempt). In order to ensure that, it is necessary to measure the number of litres flowing from the bathroom taps and showers. This could be done by using a flowmeter or a small bucket and a watch.

- *Efficient water fittings: for toilets and urinals, continuous flushing is not permitted. Toilets installed within the duration of the EU Ecolabel shall have effective toilet flush of $\leq 4,5$ L.*
- *With regards to bathroom taps and showers, the average flow of the showers should not exceed 7 litres/min and bathroom taps shall not exceed 6 litres/ minute.*
- *Every accommodation should water its plants and its garden after sunset or before high sun.*
- *Hotels and camping sites should not change sheets and towels on a daily basis. More frequent changes should be explicitly requested by law or national regulation, established by a third-party certification scheme, or requested by guests.*
- *Additional criteria are trying to encourage accommodations to manage their pool management policy so as to recycle rainwater and grey water, and to have efficient irrigation systems.*

- **Current reforms**

The European Union is trying to accelerate the reduction of water pollution:

- The **revision of the Drinking Water Directive** will strengthen water quality standards, tackling pollutants of concern, such as endocrine disruptors and microplastics, and leading to even cleaner water from the tap for all and less need for plastic bottles.
- In addition, in 2021, the European Commission adopted the EU Action Plan **“Towards a Zero Pollution for Air, Water and Soil”**. The action plan fix objective for 2050 to reach levels no longer considered harmful to health and natural ecosystems. The idea is to speed up **reducing pollution at source**. For water, the objective for 2030 is to improve water quality by reducing waste, plastic litter at sea (by 50%) and microplastics released into the environment (by 30%).

- **General Sources**

- Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC) and specific legislation: [Water \(europa.eu\)](https://europea.eu)



- [Directive on Bathing water \(Directive 2006/7/CE\)](#)
- [Floods Directive \(europa.eu\)](#)
- [Regulation on Water reuse](#)
- Ecolabel for tourist accommodation:
https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/circular-economy/eu-ecolabel-home/eu-ecolabel-tourist-accommodation/tourism-professionals-corner_en
- [EU Action Plan: "Towards a Zero Pollution for Air, Water and Soil"](#)

The Greek context

According to the Greek Legislation, **water is a natural good for the satisfaction of social needs**, and its management is carried out by the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Technology responsible for natural resources.

Additionally, private legal persons may carry out projects for the exploitation of water resources for their own productive use until their actual needs are met, but such project required a license from the respective use category authority.

Tourism installations needs to have water supply 24h a day, from 250 litres per person up to 450 litres, depending on the stars of the hotel. In case that the hotel has a garden, it is set out for grass 4 litres/ m² and for flowers 1,5-3 litres/m².

In progress?!

*Concerning the **bathing water quality**, από το σύνολο των 1634 υδάτων κολύμβησης που αξιολογήθηκαν στην Ελλάδα, το 98,65 % ταξινομείται ως εξαιρετικής ποιότητας, for 85% in the EU countries (average, see 2021 report).*

- **Reference:**
 - The harmonization of Greek legislation with the Community Water Framework Directive 2000/60 / EC was conducted with the Law N.3199/2003 (Α' 280) «Προστασία και διαχείριση των υδάτων – Εναρμόνιση με την Οδηγία 2000/60/EK



του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου της 23ης Οκτωβρίου 2000», όπως τροποποιήθηκε και ισχύει.

- Μητρώο ταυτοτήτων υδάτων κολύμβησης της Ελλάδας - bathingwaterprofiles.gr
- REPORT 2021 on bathing water quality: [EL_June-2022-2.pdf \(bathingwaterprofiles.gr\)](#)
- European Environment Agency – Report: [Greek bathing water quality in 2021](#)



Energy management

European context

In recent decades, the EU set ambitious climate and energy targets aimed at boosting the **share of renewable energy sources** in the overall energy mix and at **saving energy** through conservation and efficiency improvement measures.

- **Main policy provisions**
 - **Energy production**

The EU promotes a coordinated approach by its member States to encourage energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to ensure the Paris Agreement commitments are respected.

Currently, the adopted minimum **EU targets** for renewable energy and energy efficiency for 2030 is a binding increase of the **share of renewable sources to 32% of gross final energy consumption**. The overall renewables target is to be 40% by 2030.

To this end, the European Commission is promoting the transition to low-carbon and is facilitating private and public investment for the transition to clean energy through co-funding of projects.

Additionally, provisions enable citizens as actors in the development of renewables by enabling **renewable energy communities** and **self-consumption of renewable energy**⁶.

- **Energy consumption – energy efficiency**

The EU countries must collectively ensure a binding decrease of 7% for final energy consumption and 9 % for primary energy consumption compared with the 2020 levels.

The **Energy Efficiency Directive** states that EU countries must achieve new savings each

⁶ “Energy communities organise collective and citizen-driven energy actions that help pave the way for a clean energy transition while moving citizens to the fore. They contribute to increasing public acceptance of renewable energy projects and make it easier to attract private investments in the clean energy transition. At the same time, they have the potential to provide direct benefits to citizens by increasing energy efficiency, lowering their electricity bills and creating local job opportunities.” See: EC [Energy communities \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/energy/energy-communities)



year of 1.5% of final energy consumption from 2024 to 2030 in comparison to the actual 0.8%.

Energy efficiency requirements are also to be systematically considered when public bodies procure products, services, buildings, and work.

- **Current reforms**

The European Commission is revising the Energy Efficiency Directive to nearly double the annual energy savings obligations for EU countries from 2024 to 2030.

Recently, the [REPowerEU](#) plan set out key measures to rapidly reduce the EU's dependence on Russian fossil fuels by further accelerating the clean energy transition.

- **Transport:**

The European Commission is revising the Regulation (EU) 2019/631 on CO2 emission performance standards for passenger cars and vans. The EC also propose rules for the use of renewable and low-carbon fuels in maritime transport.

- **Building:** the EC is also revising the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive to require all new buildings to be zero-emission as of 2030

- **General Sources**

- [Energy – Investing in a sustainable energy future for Europe](#)
- [Energy efficiency directive](#)
- [2030 Climate Target Plan](#)
- [Renewable energy – directive, targets and rules | Energy](#)
- [Rural Energy Communities](#)

The Greek context

- **Renewable energy**

Based on the European legislation, the **Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan** for Greece for the period 2021-2030 aims to set for 40% reduction in Greenhouse Gaz emissions in 2030 compared to 1990, or more than 55% compared to 2005 levels.

The policy measures foreseen for GHG emissions reduction and removal include:

- Shutdown of lignite-fired power plants and interconnection of autonomous island systems;



- Promoting natural gas as an intermediate fuel for reducing the carbon footprint of the energy system;
- Promoting renewable energy sources (RES), storage systems and fuel production from RES;
- Improvement in energy efficiency of buildings, industry and infrastructures;
- Reduction in emissions in the transport sector.

Concerning renewable energy sources (RES) : in the electricity sector, the share of renewable sources should rise to at least 60% by 2030. In the heating and cooling sector, RES share in gross final energy consumption will rise to 42.5% by 2030 (30.6% in 2020).

In addition, the **National Climate Law**, adopted in May 2022⁷, sets targets to reduce total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 55% by 2030, by 80% by 2040 and to reach net zero emissions by 2050. It defines key emissions reduction measures, including the phase-out of lignite-fired generation by 2028. These objectives need strong efforts to reduce energy consumption and increase renewable energy!

- **Energy communities**

The **energy communities** (EC) in Greece constitute a new model of self-generation, selfconsumption of electricity and independence of the everyday electricity consumer through their advancement to producers. Since the publication of Law 4513 in January 2018, the **energy communities** have entered the Greek energy market. Yet, the gaps in the legal framework and the delays of bureaucracy have caused obstacles to the institutional shielding of this new way of selfgeneration of electricity. Members of ECs can be citizens and legal entities, as well as regional and local authorities, while the purpose of each EC can be profitable (i.e., economic benefits through the sale of the electricity produced) or not (self-consumption)⁸.

⁷ Νόμος 4936/2022 για την "Προστασία του κλίματος και της βιοποικιλότητας και τη διαχείριση των αποβλήτων και άλλες διατάξεις"

⁸ Yannis Maniatis, Haris Doukas, Emmanuel Karagiannis (2022) A Greek Green Deal: building energy democracy and fighting energy poverty. GreeSE Papers n.181



Tilos is the first island has been energy independent and fully autonomous in Greece. The island has managed to become autonomous due to a privately developed innovative technology system: an hybrid energy system which utilises various energy sources, including wind and solar power, while adjusting the energy production, storage and use to the real-time meteorological and technical operation data. As a result, charging and storage have taken place in a way that allow the power supply run to the electricity system without any interruptions and at the lowest cost possible, maximizing at the end the energy efficiency of the whole system.

The project has brought many benefits to the community, the local economy, and the environment: the utilisation of different renewable energy sources; the protection of the island's bio-diversity and ecosystem; the creation of jobs; and the promotion of ecotourism.

See: <https://kede.gr/tilos-to-nisi-pou-anatrepei-ta-dedomena-stin-paragogi-energeias/>

- **Energy consumption**

Ο άρθρο 41 του νόμου για την "Προστασία του κλίματος και της βιοποικιλότητας και τη διαχείριση των αποβλήτων και άλλες διατάξεις" αναφέρεται στην αειφόρο διαχείριση του τουριστικού τομέα και περιλαμβάνει διατάξεις σχετικά με την προώθηση του αειφορικού τουρισμού, την ανάπτυξη πράσινων τουριστικών υποδομών, τη διατήρηση και προστασία της φύσης και του πολιτιστικού κληρονομήματος, την προώθηση της ενεργειακής απόδοσης και της χρήσης ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας στον τουριστικό τομέα.

Και οι μικρές τουριστικές επιχειρήσεις έχουν υποχρεώσεις σύμφωνα με το Νόμο αυτό για την κλιματική αλλαγή στον τομέα του τουρισμού. Οι υποχρεώσεις αυτές περιλαμβάνουν, μεταξύ άλλων, την υποβολή πληροφοριών και δεδομένων για τις εκπομπές αερίων του θερμοκηπίου από τις τουριστικές δραστηριότητές τους και το σχεδιασμό και υλοποίηση μέτρων μείωσης αυτών των εκπομπών. Επίσης, πρέπει να ακολουθούν τις οδηγίες και τους κανονισμούς για την ενεργειακή απόδοση των κτιρίων τους και την αειφορία στη χρήση των φυσικών πόρων, όπως το νερό και η ενέργεια.

- **Buildings**

All new buildings must meet the minimum requirements of energy efficiency.

The following categories of buildings are excluded from compliance with the minimum requirements:



- buildings protected as part of a specific environment or due to architectural or historical value, insofar as compliance towards certain minimum energy efficiency requirements it would alter in an unacceptable way their character or appearance
- buildings used as places of worship
- industrial facilities, craftmanships and warehouses
- buildings with a total useful area of less than fifty square meters (50 m²)
- cases of properties which according to urban planning are not "structurally projects" or do not have the concept of building.

In new buildings or building units, it is mandatory to cover part (60%) of requirements for hot water from solar thermal systems. There is the possibility to use an alternative, but just in case that the alternative is proven to be more efficient than solar energy.

With regards to the energy efficiency certificate, this is mandatory at the following cases:

- after the construction of a new building
- after completion of a radical renovation of a building or building unit
- after the sale of a building and when leasing the building.

- **Resources**

- ΚΕΣΙΣΟΓΛΟΥ ΙΟΡΔΑΝΗΣ, (2020) ΒΙΩΣΙΜΗ ΤΟΥΡΙΣΤΙΚΗ ΑΝΑΠΤΥΞΗ ΜΕ ΤΗΝ ΧΡΗΣΗ ΑΝΑΝΕΩΣΙΜΩΝ ΠΗΓΩΝ ΕΝΕΡΓΕΙΑΣ: Η ΠΕΡΙΠΤΩΣΗ ΤΗΣ ΛΕΣΒΟΥ, ΔΙΠΛΩΜΑΤΙΚΗ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑ http://ikee.lib.auth.gr/record/325391/files/KESISOGLOU853_DE.pdf
- Lucija Rakocevic (Th!nk E), Malgorzata Matowska (Th!nk E), Andries De Brouwer (3E) (2022) [Study on regulatory barriers and recommendation for clean energy transition on the islands - Greece Publication](#)



Mobility and Accessibility

European context

- **Tourism for all: accessibility**

According to the European commission “While designing, executing, operating, maintaining and communicating about your tourism business, you must ensure that it is accessible and available to everyone.” (see: *Tourism for all*, European Commission - [Accessibility](#))

Accessibility covers:

- **physical accessibility** – improving spaces and infrastructure to create an environment where citizens can move around freely
- **communication accessibility** – helping people with communication difficulties to get their message across via tools and trained staff
- **web accessibility** – making booking services and related websites easier to access

An International Standard ISO 21902 on Tourism and related services fixed some requirements and recommendations to make tourism accessible for all: it provides requirements and guidelines to facilitate equal access and enjoyment of tourism by people of all ages and abilities. (see: [ISO - ISO 21902:2021 - Tourism and related services – Accessible tourism for all – Requirements and recommendations](#).)

Other major regulations and laws on accessibility at the international and European levels are as follows:

- UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities:
[Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\) | United Nations Enable](#)
- The European Accessibility [Directive \(EU\) 2019 on the accessibility requirements for products and services \(europa.eu\)](#)

- **Sustainable mobility**

In order to translate into law the European Green Deal, the European Commission proposed the '[Fit for 55' package](#) in 2021, to review the existing law and add new initiatives on climate, energy and transport-related legislation.

Concerning mobility the objective is to promote sustainable and smart mobility, in line with [sustainable and smart mobility strategy and action plan](#), in order to reach the following objectives:

By 2030

- at least 30 million zero-emission cars will be in operation on European roads



- 100 European cities will be climate neutral.
- high-speed rail traffic will double across Europe
- scheduled collective travel for journeys under 500 km should be carbon neutral
- automated mobility will be deployed at large scale
- zero-emission marine vessels will be market-ready

By 2035

- zero-emission large aircraft will be market-ready

By 2050

- nearly all cars, vans, buses as well as new heavy-duty vehicles will be zero-emission.
- rail freight traffic will double.
- a fully operational, multimodal Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) for sustainable and smart transport with high speed connectivity.

To reach these objectives, measures includes, for instance:

1. Boosting the uptake of **zero-emission vehicles**, and related infrastructure - for instance by installing public charging points.
2. Making **interurban and urban mobility healthy and sustainable** - for instance by developing extra cycling infrastructure over the next 10 years.
3. **Pricing carbon and providing better incentives for users** – for instance by pursuing a comprehensive set of measures to deliver fair and efficient pricing across all transport.

Greek context

- **Accessibility to all**

Regarding the inclusion of people with disabilities, the Greek legislation states that in any building or structural installation, the **accessibility of this to all, without barriers**, must be ensured.

In the **premises of new buildings** other than residential buildings, it is also necessary to ensure the horizontal and vertical, autonomous and safe access by people with disabilities and obstructed persons and their service in all exterior and interior spaces of buildings, according to the planning instructions of the Ministry of Environment and energy "planning for everyone". The accessible **sanitary areas** are included in the above-mentioned areas.

If the above buildings have **parking spaces**, then 5% of them or at least one will be properly configured for wheelchair use.

The possibility of **autonomous and safe access** of all buildings by persons with disabilities and their service is ensured by accessible horizontal and vertical routes, starting from the level of



the sidewalk and reaching to the elevator door and the indoor and outdoor areas of these buildings. It consists of elements of appropriate specifications, such as ramps, lifts, lifts, with the provision of protected accessible waiting areas in case of emergencies, when the floor population is less than two hundred (200) people or one (1) space with two wheelchair seats, when the floor population is more than two hundred (200) people.

Additionally, the **outdoor areas** should be constructed in a way that people with disabilities can equally use them.

In **legally existing buildings** that do not have an elevator and at the time of their construction, it was not mandatory to build it, it is allowed, notwithstanding the provisions of this and the special building conditions of the area, construction of an elevator or other mechanical means of covering altitude differences and the area of access to them, subject to the drafting or updating of the building's identity. The agreement of the architecture Council is required for listed buildings and traditional villages or regions.

See: <https://travelthegreekway.com/greece-for-mobility-impaired-people/>

- **Sustainable mobility**

The Greek National Energy and Climate Plan of 2020 sets out estimated energy consumption, planned energy efficiency measures and the improvements that EU countries expect to achieve. It includes reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in the transport sector.

Specifically, the NEEAP includes the Measure 12 with the **Introduction of electric vehicles and electric vehicle recharging points**. The objective of this measure is the promotion of the purchase and use of electric vehicles (cars, motorcycles, bicycles and heavy vehicles) and construction of vehicle charging points. The measure involves the **provision of favourable tax incentives and subsidies for the purchase of electric vehicles (EVs)** of any type for both private and public agencies operating vehicle fleets. In addition, the measure includes a subsidy for the construction of public and private vehicle charging points, powered mainly by RES.

However, at present, the number of EVs and charging stations remains very limited in Greece, compared to other EU countries.



In **Astypalea**, significant European investments contribute to changing internal mobility. As part of the [EMOBICITY](#) programme, the Greek government and the Volkswagen Group are creating an innovative mobility system on the island: the island's current transport system will **switch to electric vehicles**, powered by renewable energy produced locally. In the long term, Astypalea should become a model island for climate-neutral mobility.

You can discover other interesting local initiatives here:
<https://civitas.eu/thematic-areas/active-mobility>



Biodiversity and nature protection

Biodiversity is defined as the variety of living organisms, wherever they come from, including land, sea, and other kinds of ecosystems.

European context

- **Main policy provisions**

In 1979, following its international engagement to the Bonn Convention on Migratory Species and the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, the European Union committed to nature protection with the so-called “Birds Directive” to protect bird species and their habitat.

Since then, the legislation has been developed and enlarged to the protection of the ecosystems hosting wild fauna and flora species. The “Habitats Directive” (1992) helps maintain biodiversity and identifies “Natural habitats type of Community interest” which are areas in danger of disappearance or that outstanding examples of biogeographical regions (eg. Alpine, Macaronesian, Mediterranean, etc.). **It protects over 1000 animals and plant species and over 200 types of habitats and is the starting point of the European network “Natura 2000”.** All these measures led Member states to identify and monitor endangered habitats and species; and to designate protected areas where human activities may be limited.

Of course, other policies related to water protection, pollution, agriculture, forest or other themes also influence the preservation of biotopes and of the species they host.

- **Specific provision in the field of tourism**

According to the criteria of the EcoLabel for tourist accommodation, tourism professional engaged in the process should provide:

- Communication/education notices on local biodiversity and nature conservation for the guests (information on Nature trails, protected natural areas, on the values of environmental sustainability, etc.)
- Guest entertainment including elements of environmental education (animation, event, nature observation posts, etc.)



- They should also use native or non-invasive alien species (i.e. plant species that occur naturally in the country) used in outdoor areas or aquatic vegetation.

- **Current reforms**

Nowadays, the EU strategy is no more oriented only towards protection but, facing the continuous loss of biodiversity, also on restoration!

The [EU Biodiversity Strategy](#) was drawn in 2021 to call for binding targets to restore degraded ecosystems, in particular those with the most potential to capture and store carbon. The Strategy contains specific commitments and actions to be delivered by 2030.

- Enlarge the existing Natura 2000 areas network with stricter protection for protected areas
- **Launching an EU nature restoration plan, together with the foreseen Nature restoration law, for degraded ecosystems**
- The improvement of knowledge and financing for biodiversity
- Better respect of nature in public and business decision-making

In this framework, the Commission proposed **a new law to restore ecosystems**. The proposal combines an overarching restoration objective for the long-term recovery of nature in the EU and foresees binding restoration targets for specific habitats and species. These measures should cover at least 20% of the EU's land and sea areas by 2030, and all ecosystems in need of restoration by 2050.

At international level, end 2022, during the Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (**COP-15**) to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, the EU (party to the Convention) and 195 countries agreed on **goals and targets for action by 2030 and 2050 and fixed targets, among which the restoration of 30% degraded ecosystems** globally (on land and sea) by 2030 and the reduction of **pollution risks and negative impacts of pollution from all sources by 2030** to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity and ecosystem functions.

- **Sources**

- [European Environmental Agency](#)
- [Natura 2000 and the Directives](#)
- The European Biodiversity Strategy [Biodiversity strategy for 2030 \(europa.eu\)](#)
- Proposal for Nature Restoration Law
https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/nature-restoration-law_en



- Convention on Biological Diversity <https://www.cbd.int/>
- European Commission EU Ecolabel Tourist Accommodation Commission Decision 2017/175/EC https://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/documents/TA_UM-final-2018.pdf

Greek context

Since 1937, Greece had started to identify natural areas of specific ecological importance (forests, wetlands etc.) and place them under special protection. The first protected area was the Mount Olympus in 1938!

These areas are governed by a special institutional regime based on national, European and international legislation. Special obligations for the protection of nature derive from relevant International Conventions, which Greece has ratified such as: the Ramsar Convention and the Internationally designated Wetlands of International Importance; The World Heritage Sites (UNESCO) and the Biosphere Reserves; The Specially Protected Areas of the Barcelona Convention.

Around 34,9% of Greek land is covered by protected areas under various status:

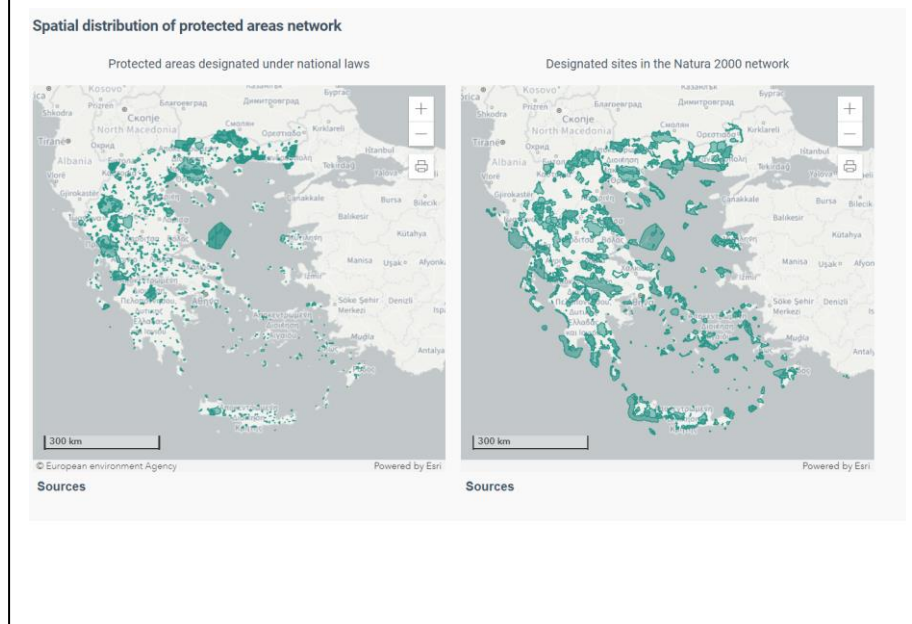
- **Περιοχές προστασίας της βιοποικιλότητας:** Περιλαμβάνονται οι περιοχές του Εθνικού Καταλόγου Περιοχών του Ευρωπαϊκού Οικολογικού Δικτύου Natura 2000. In Greece, the Natura 2000 network includes a total of 446 areas occupying terrestrial zones of more than 27% of the Greek territory and marine areas of more than 19%.
- **Εθνικά πάρκα.** terrestrial, aquatic or mixed areas, with particular value and interest due to the quality and variety of their natural and cultural characteristics, especially biological, ecological, geological, geomorphological, and aesthetic. In National natural parks, human activities are allowed if they respect the natural environment, landscape and local architecture, providing that these have been predicted by the Designation Act and the management plan of the Park. Seventeen National Parks have been declared according to Law 1650/1986.
- **Προστατευόμενα τοπία και προστατευόμενοι φυσικοί σχηματισμοί.** Χαρακτηρίζονται περιοχές ή στοιχεία σημειακού χαρακτήρα που έχουν ιδιαίτερη οικολογική, γεωλογική ή γεωμορφολογική αξία ή συμβάλλουν στη διατήρηση των φυσικών διεργασιών και στην προστασία φυσικών πόρων (δέντρα, συστάδες δέντρων και θάμνων, θαλάσσια προστατευτική βλάστηση, παρόχθια και παράκτια βλάστηση, φυσικοί φράχτες, καταρράκτες, πηγές, φαράγγια, θίνες, ύφαλοι, σπηλιές, κλπ.). Ως Προστατευόμενοι Φυσικοί Σχηματισμοί είναι δυνατό να χαρακτηρίζονται επιμέρους περιοχές εντός Εθνικών Πάρκων, Περιοχών Προστασίας της Βιοποικιλότητας ή/και Καταφυγίων Άγριας Ζωής και να



εντάσσονται εντός ζωνών κλιμακούμενης προστασίας των περιοχών αυτών. Με προϋφιστάμενο Νομικό πλαίσιο και κυρίως βάσει διατάξεων του Δασικού κώδικα και της Δασικής Νομοθεσίας χαρακτηρίστηκαν περιοχές προστασίας ως Εθνικοί Δρυμοί, Αισθητικά Δάση, Διατηρητέα Μνημεία της Φύσης, Ελεγχόμενες Κινηγетικές Περιοχές και Εκτροφεία θηραμάτων.

- **Καταφύγια άγριας ζωής.** Χαρακτηρίζονται περιοχές που αξιολογούνται ως κατάλληλες για την ανάπτυξη πληθυσμών της άγριας πανίδας και χλωρίδας ή ως βιότοποι αναπαραγωγής, διατροφής, διαχείμασης ειδών της άγριας πανίδας, ή ως περιοχές αναπαραγωγής ψαριών και συγκέντρωσης γόνου. Ως Καταφύγια Άγριας Ζωής μπορούν να χαρακτηρίζονται και οι οικολογικοί διάδρομοι μεταξύ προστατευόμενων περιοχών.

You can visualise the protected areas in your region on the website: Biodiversity Information System for Europe [Greece \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu)



However, **Management Bodies** of these protected areas **lack both funds and political support** to be operational. It is therefore of the responsibility of the tourism professionals to get informed and inform their clients about the **protected areas, and fragile species of local fauna and flora** in order to prevent wrong behaviour such as damage, collection or cutting of endemic flora.

In addition, **motor vehicles off-road** shall not be permitted in ecologically sensitive areas such as, but not limited to, permanent or seasonal lakes and backwaters and their shores, the foreshore, sand dunes, rivers, streams and streams, forests, meadows, pastures, priority

habitats listed in Annex I to Directive 92/43/EEC, as well as on trails located in such areas (this binding does not cover the necessary movement for the treatment of natural disasters, for vehicles of the management body of these areas, or for access to cultivated land).

- **Resources**
- See <https://biodiversity-greece.gr/en/prostateyomenes-perioches-tis-elladas/>
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Landscape insertion of tourist facilities

European context

- **Main policy provisions**

Most of the regulations in the fields of land management, soils and landscapes are managed by the Member States. Nevertheless, the Member States of the Council of Europe validated in 2000 a European landscape convention (validated in 2016) which proposes principles for the conservation of European landscapes. Many recommendations are made, and many have been included in the regulations of certain member states of the Council of Europe [Council of Europe Landscape Convention](#)

- **Land management**

In 2006, the European Commission established a strategy for soil conservation which proposes some major areas of intervention for the conservation and protection of soil quality, the control of artificialization and the conservation of natural soils. However, this was not translated into a European regulatory framework.

https://ec.europa.eu/environment/archives/soil/pdf/SEC_2006_620.pdf

- **Urbanism and landscape insertion**

On an EU level, the conservation of natural and wooded areas is based on the above mentioned birds (79/409 / EEC) and habitats (92/43 / EEC) directives (see Biodiversity).

Member States must prevent, by appropriate contractual, regulatory or administrative measures, the deterioration of the natural habitats and the habitats of the species present on those sites. Protection measures are not listed by European law but at the level of each Member State, the European Commission reserving the right to sanction States which have not taken the appropriate measures.

European regulations do not set specific restrictions for human activities, including tourist activities: it is the national authorities who must ensure that activities do not harm the conservation of sites, and prohibit them if necessary.



On natural or cultural sites that are listed as **UNESCO World Heritage Sites**, the development of tourist activities must be compatible with the management and protection axes integrated into the site management plan.

[Convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage \(1972, November 16\)](#)

The Greek context

One of the main threats on Greek landscape is the anarchic development of construction outside urbanized areas.

According to the Greek legislation, regarding the tourism facilities, it is mentioned that there are many in off plans areas. About these, the minimum area of even/buildable land is generally increased to eight (8) acres. An exception is land between 4-8 acres, which meet energy, environmental or urban planning criteria, which are determined by decision of the Minister of Environment and energy.

For tourism facilities, other than organized tourism camps (camping) and tourism ports, the building factor is formed, depending on the area of the field, as follows:

- Land area up to fifty (50) acres: 0.18
- Land area up to one hundred (100) acres: 0.18 for the first 50 acres and 0.15 for the rest of the land area
- Land area over one hundred (100) acres: 0.18 for the first 50 acres, 0.15 up to 100 acres, and 0.10 for the rest of the land area.
- A maximum area of construction of tourism facilities is determined at eight (8) acres. It is possible to construct an area exceeding 8 acres if part of the land is granted to the municipality without consideration and under conditions
- About the mixed accommodation, it is possible to build a hotel (regardless of Star category) in combination with tourist furnished houses, under conditions. In this case, the building factor is set at 0.2.

The responsible bodies for Licensing procedure for the establishment of an hotel should help you better define the rules, according to your specific context and project:

- Regional Tourism offices
- Directorate of Regional Planning and Environmental Development of Regional authorities.
- EOT, Directorate of Tourist Facilities, Technical Services.
- Town Planning Authority of the relevant Municipality.
- Regional Tourism Offices.



Some specificities of the **Greek landscape** are also **protected by the UNESCO**. Even if these classifications are not leading to binding disposition, they encourage all stakeholders to preserve and restore when needed these elements of the Greek landscapes.

- The technics of **Dry stones walling**, so common in the Greek rural areas, was inscribed in 2018 on the Representative List of the Intangible **Cultural Heritage of Humanity**
- The **Mont Olympus, Gorge of Samaria and the Asterousia Mountain Range** have been designated as **Biosphere reserve**

See: <https://whc.unesco.org/>



Exposure to natural hazards

European context

There is no single EU regulation covering all natural hazards. Regulations are mainly issued by the states. However, some regulations have been issued for specific risks, especially following natural hazards.

In 2007, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union adopted the [directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on the assessment and management of flood risks](#). This directive aims to establish a **common framework for the prevention and management of natural disasters** in Europe to protect human life, the environment and material assets. It applies to all natural hazards, such as floods, landslides, earthquakes, storms and forest fires.

The directive includes the adoption of **disaster management plans (DMPs) at the national and regional levels**, which define the actions to be taken in the event of a natural disaster. These plans must include prevention, preparedness and crisis management measures aimed at mitigating the impacts of these disasters on people and infrastructure, including tourist infrastructure.

It provides for the establishment of **flood management plans at the national and regional levels**, as well as the drawing up of flood risk maps. This document should be taken into account when setting up a hotel in a remote area as it provides the necessary information to prevent and avoid these risks, particularly in flood-prone areas.

The Greek context

- **Floods**

Regarding **flood protection**, there is no specific legislation for hotels and the tourism field. The services of the Ministry of Environment, Energy and climate change, as well as the services of the Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport and networks and the competent services of the decentralized administration or the region, may study and perform settlement / flood protection projects and maintenance work on watercourses or outsource them.



In case of a flood, organized preventive removal of citizens from an area documented that threatened by evolving or imminent disaster, is a civil protection action which is launched to protect their life and health. The organized removal of citizens is considered as a measure of their preventive protection, which it must be routed on time (while the disaster is in progress) and under certain conditions and restrictions. In cases of sudden floods when there are requests of Citizens for assistance to areas already inundated or considered by the development of their personal safety is at immediate and constant risk, the fire department is responsible for their immediate transport them to a safe place.

- **Forest fires**

As it has already been mentioned, there is no specific legislation about forest fires and tourism. However, in every building there is the need for an escape route to exist. It is forbidden to pass escape routes from auxiliary areas such as sanitary, storage and electromechanical facilities.

Escape routes usually consist of three distinct and successive stages:

- the unprotected escape route (the course from any point of the building to a safe space)
- the fire-protected escape route (the second stage of the route which begins with an emergency exit and leads to an exit at the level of the evacuation floor, eg. a fire-protected staircase) and
- the horizontal route to the final exit (the continuation of the fire-protected routes from the above or underground floors of the building that end up on the evacuation floor in the direction of its final exits: either in a free and safe area of the plot or the open air).

In addition, they must be protected inside and outside the building from any danger that may be caused by flames or fumes from ventilation systems, electromechanical installations, boiler rooms or other hazardous areas.

Furthermore, the buildings must have a fire-preventive index, according to its height.

Also, the separation of a building into fire compartments aims to contain the fire within the space that occurred and to reduce its horizontal and/or vertical spread to the rest of the building. In order to limit the spread of fire from one fire compartment to another, the walls of the fire-department must be extended in height, through the roof - roof or building gap gaps, above the roof overlap by at least 0,50 m.

- **Earthquakes**

About earthquakes and their prevention, the Greek anti-earthquake regulation applies for the buildings.

Due to its complexity and its specific language it can be found here: <https://www.oasp.gr/userfiles/EAK2000.pdf>





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