

## **Natura 2000 and the Proposal to Protect the Wetlands of Kalloni**

(What follows is based on a translation of a summary of the long and very detailed proposal. The summary was given by the office of the Mayor of Kalloni to the Friends of Green Lesbos in the spring of 2002. At that time the complete proposal (which remains controversial among local residents) had not received final approval from the Town Council and thus had not yet been passed on to the appropriate governmental authorities for implementation. This means that it will be several years until the proposal can be enforced. Friends of Green Lesbos was assured that the proposal will be sent forward soon.)

The Proposal to Save the Wetlands and the environment of the area surrounding the Gulf of Kalloni is based on the law 1650/86. This law is general and gives each place the right to develop its own plan to protect itself in accord with its needs.

The Proposal to Protect the Wetlands of the Gulf of Kalloni was commissioned by the Mayor of Kalloni and prepared by graduates of the University of the Aegean/Environmental Studies Program. It submitted in May of 2001 in a public meeting. The report characterizes the Gulf of Kalloni area as an area suitable for ECO-DEVELOPMENT. This means that the protection of the environment must be carried on in conjunction with human needs and development consistent with farming and grazing and with tourism.

The report divides the Gulf area into three zones in which different levels of protection and development are mandated. These are the RED ZONE, the YELLOW ZONE, and the GREEN ZONE. The research team designated each of these zones on a map.

**THE RED ZONE.** This zone includes the least land, most importantly the seashores, the riverbeds and the riverbanks, the salt pans and marshes. These areas will receive the greatest protection. In these areas *nothing can be built*. No building permits will be given. There are a few exceptions to this rule, for example on at the seacoast; these exceptions are specified in the report. The RED ZONE includes:

1. The mouth of the river Makara;
2. the mouth of the Kardama river and the wetland of Apothikas;
3. the wetland Koukoumo and the plane tree forest of Paliomandres;
4. the wetland and lake of Parakoila, the mouth and the river Taxiarchis of Parakoila, and the marsh of Parakoila;
5. the Potamia river and its mouth, the Karaboulia, the wetland of Nine Kamares, the lake and the marsh of Skala Kallonis;
6. the mouth of the river Tsiknia, the wetland of the salt pans of Kalloni, the Milopotamo river and its mouth;
7. the Kandria and Kalami, the wetland of Mesa and Askondrixas (known to birders as Derbyshire), and the Krioneri river;
8. the mouth and the river Boubaris;

9. the mouth and the river of Akladeri; the nearby wetland Akladeri-Makris river;
10. to wetland of Pharmakies;
12. the Almiropotamao river and the salt pans of Polychinitou;
13. the wetland of Nifida

At Makara the seacoast, the beach, the rivers, and the rivermouths are already off-limits for all building, due to rulings issued by the archaeological services and other ministries.

**In the RED ZONE IT IS PERMITTED TO:**

1. continue already existing grazing, as long as traditional methods are used, and not to exceed currently used land; also beekeeping, free grazing, not including goats, and farming;
2. continue to use and refurbish simple and necessary farm buildings (storehouses, stables, watering systems); these may be changed slightly to make them more beautiful and less of a blight on the environment;
3. fight against invasive flora and fauna that are threatening the traditional ones;
4. to enrich the area by adding plants or animals which are not foreign to the area;
5. to engage in scientific research and archaeological excavation;
6. to undertake measures and works which are necessary for the management and control of the area (for example, environmental education, hostels, paths, etc.)
7. to create interventions that will return the environment to previous states or improve it;
8. to visit on foot or conveyed by animals, but not with cars;
9. to conserve and renovate traditional volcanic stone buildings, to improve them for aesthetic reasons, or for reasons of health and safety, or to bring water and electricity;
10. to conserve and improve roads that exist, but not using methods that harm the environment, for example asphalt.

**In the RED ZONE IT IS NOT PERMITTED TO:**

1. excavate for building materials or rock, or to establish industrial or light industrial enterprises or enterprises such as chemical factories and the like, nor even to establish thermo- or hydro-electricity plants;
2. destroy or change the natural contours of the area by bulldozing, leveling, removing great amounts of soil, or adding cement to raise current soil levels, or any ugly pavement;
3. cut, uproot, control, or in any other way destroying types of grasses and flowers, or shrubs or trees, that are rare, protected, or threatened with extinction;
4. destroy or change traditionally built aspects of the environment such as drywalls, stone paths, stone roads, stone bridges, wells, fountains, water mills, threshing floors, hot baths; instead it is suggested that these be repaired in conjunction with permission granted by the Ministry of Culture;
5. open roads near the shore or build parking lots within 100 meters of the shoreline;

6. dump garbage or building waste, or to build of garbage dumps or building waste dumps; where these already occur, they are to be removed;
7. to reclaim land or extend farming areas in ways that harm the environment (for example draining of wetlands, changing of river courses); to use external sprinkler systems; to cut forestland; to set up greenhouses; or the use or spread chemicals (for example, the spraying of chemical poisons in wetland areas); the control and gradual cessation of the use of chemical fertilizers and growth hormones and their replacement by ecological farming methods is recommended;
8. build anything; *no new building is permitted in the red zone* (except what has been mentioned above); no new houses or hotels, nor expansions of existing ones, nor the building of any new water canals or dams for farming;
9. to increase traffic on roads beyond that which already exists on current roads; to use machines to clean the beaches; or to placing of signs;
10. to establish large-scale farming or stock-raising using factory-farming or agro-business methods;
11. hunt, camp, light fires or candles, stage athletic events or military exercises, allow the approach of military boats, or the setting of fishing nets in the rivers.

These restrictions apply only in the relatively small area of the RED ZONE.

**THE YELLOW ZONE.** The YELLOW ZONE includes Makara, Apothika, Koukoumos-Paliomandres, Kambos Paraklion and the forest of Dousla, Karaboulia, Nine Kamares, Limini, Metochia, Tsikvias, Lontzaria, Kambos (reclaimed for industrial use in 2001-2) and the salt pans of Kalloni, Milopotamos, Kandria, Mesa, Boubaris and Ancient Pyrra, Akladeri and Pharmakies, Alikoudi, and the salt pans of Polychnitos.

Here is permitted: the continuation of current levels of farm development; new farm developments only if special research shows that there is adequate water and that new development will deprive no one else of water; the establishment of greenhouses; the building of houses, farm storage buildings, stores, and hotels. The research team suggested that building could only occur on landholdings of 10 stremmas or more; the mayor of Kalloni, bowing to public opinion, suggested that this be reduced to 5 stremmas. Within these limits (whichever prevail) touristic building must be aesthetic, not exceed 30 rooms, to belong to the B category or above, and to supply its own water treatment system. In the event that the private land is extensive, more rooms can be built only if they are in groups of no more than 30 per building unit (no larger than 1600 m<sup>2</sup>), because large building units spoil natural beauty. Hunting is prohibited.

**THE GREEN ZONE.** The GREEN ZONE includes the rest of the Gulf of Kalloni area.

Here is permitted whatever is permitted today, but with greater concern for the environment and the environment (for example, with the solar heaters following the roof line rather than jutting up into the landscape).