

*Please provide to following details on the origin of this report*

Contracting Party	GREECE
<b>National Focal Point</b>	
Full name of the institution:	MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT - PHYSICAL PLANNING AND PUBLUC WORKS
Name and title of contact officer:	S. SPYROPOULOU
Mailing address:	GENERAL DIRECTORATE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING DIVISION NATURE MANAGEMENT SECTION
Telephone:	+30 1 69.18. 202
Fax:	+30 1 69.18.487
E-mail:	<u><a href="mailto:Tdfp@minenv.gr">Tdfp@minenv.gr</a></u>
<b>Contact officer for national report (if different)</b>	
Name and title of contact officer:	
Mailing address:	
Telephone:	
Fax:	
E-mail:	
<b>Submission</b>	
Signature of officer responsible for submitting national report:	JOHN VOURNAS GENERAL DIRECTOR
Date of submission:	25/ 7/ 01

***Please provide summary information on the process by which this report has been prepared, including information on the types of stakeholders who have been actively involved in its preparation and on material which was used as a basis for the report***

This report is based on information provided by the Ministries of Agriculture (General Secretariat of forests and natural environment) and of Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works (General Directorate for Environment) in April- May 2001.

The forest policies in Greece are mainly formulated by the Ministry of Agriculture, which works closely with the Institute for Forest Research and its relevant Local Research Stations and the University School for Forestry and the Natural Environment in Thessaloniki. Pilot work, relevant to this context has been also undertaken by the Ministry of Environment - Physical Planning and Public Works in terms of habitat classification and mapping, protected species initiatives and the network of protected areas.

Work has been undertaken also by NGO's, namely the Hellenic Ornithological Society and WWF- Greece, working on forest bird diversity and by the Greek Biotope- Wetland Center (terrestrial habitat classification and monitoring projects).

The report of Greece must be considered in the context of the country's full membership in the European Union. Much of the work carried out related to forest biodiversity is the implementation of EC Common Agriculture Policy and funding has been available from the implementation of relevant EC Regulations

The recently elaborated documents of the European Commission's Biodiversity Action Plans are subject to discussion which will have an overall influence in the National Biodiversity Strategy (under elaboration).

Issues related to the relevant decisions of the CBD are discussed through the participation of Greece in the European Environmental Agency and in OECD, and even more related is the work in the Council of Europe and the Ministerial Conferences in Strasbourg -1990, Helsinki-1993, Lisbon-1998.

The text of Decision IV/7 has been discussed in the Steering Committee of Greek Biodiversity Project in the period 1998-99, and its main points are included in the draft of the National Biodiversity strategy (Chapter on forests), prepared by the Co-ordinating Unit for the Implementation of the CBD in Greece (University of Athens, Zoological Museum). Discussion amongst the member states of the EU on the European Community Biodiversity Strategy has been also been a way of approaching the Decision IV/7.

The main reference material for this report is the following:

1. CRITERIA AND INDICATORS FOR THE SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN GREECE, 2000, Ministry of Agriculture, General Secretariat of

Forests and Natural Environment.

Contents: Quantitative and descriptive indicators on 6 criteria  
Criterion 1 Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to global carbon cycles

Criterion 2 Maintenance of forest ecosystem health and vitality

Criterion 3 Maintenance and encouragement of productive functions of forests (wood and non-wood)

Criterion 4 Maintenance, conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity

Criterion 5 Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management( Notably soil and water)

Criterion 6.Maintenance of other socio-economic functions and conditions

2. GREEK NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR COMBATING DESERTIFICATION, 2001, National Committee for Combating Desertification

Contains evaluations on current problems and measures directed to forests (Chapter 6), including General Objectives, Prevention of illegal land use conversion, Control of forest fires, Protection against inappropriate grazing, Management and exploitation of forests, implementation proposals, research objectives.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF EU REGULATIONS RELATED TO FORESTS 1997-2000 IN GREECE, information provided by the web page of the Greek Ministry of Agriculture, on the following regulations:

R.1257/1999 reforestation of agricultural lands- R.2080/92 Aid-scheme for forestry measures in agriculture.

R. 2158/92- protection of forests against fires.

R. 3528/86, R.1091/94, R.690/95, R.1390/97 protection of forests against atmospheric pollution.

R. 1615/89 European Forestry Information and Communication System.

R. 1467/94 on genetic resources in agriculture (collection and ex-situ conservation of wild forest species important to agriculture).

4. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE ENVIRONMENT 1996-2000, Ministry of Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works (SECOND COMMUNITY SUPPORT FRAMEWORK) Measure 3.NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, includes actions for endangered species, for habitat type assessment and description, for the establishment of 11 new protected areas of international importance, for the management of sites of importance for nature conservation and for landscape assessments.

5. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE COUNTRYSIDE 2000- 2006, Ministry of Agriculture

The 6<sup>th</sup> Priority Line "Development and Protection of Natural Resources and the Environment" includes Measure 6.3 for Management Plans for the sustainable development of forests and ecologically sensitive areas and Development of Genetic material Bank.

6. NATIONAL MASTER PLAN FOR THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT (2001-2006),  
Ministry Of Environment- Physical Planning and Public Works

It includes Action Plan 1 : Establishment of a system of protected areas, including the NATURA 2000 sites and sites with habitats of protected/ endangered species; Action Plan 2:Horizontal actions for the conservation of protected species outside protected areas; Action Plan 3: Thematic actions for the conservation of biodiversity and landscape outside protected areas (forests, marine and coastal environment, agricultural land)

**Decision IV/7 on Forest biological Diversity**

1. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this decision by your country?					
a) High		b) Medium	X	c) Low	
2. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?					
a) Good		b) Adequate		c) Limiting	X
				d) Severely limiting	

3. Has your country assessed the status and trends of its forest biological diversity and identified options for its conservation and sustainable use? (Decision IV/7, paragraph 12)	
a) no	
b) assessment underway (please give details below)	
c) assessment completed (please give details below)	X
d) not relevant	

<b><i>If a developing country Party or a Party with economy in transition -</i></b>	
4. Has your country requested assistance through the financial mechanism for projects that promote the implementation of the focused work programme on forest biological diversity? (Decision IV/7, paragraph 7)	
a) no	
b) yes (please give details below)	

***Programme element 1: Holistic and inter-sectoral ecosystem approaches that integrate the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking account of social and cultural and economic considerations***

5. Has your country identified methodologies for enhancing the integration of forest biological diversity conservation and sustainable use into an holistic approach to sustainable forest management at the national level? (Work Programme, paragraph 13)	
a) no	
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	X
d) not applicable	
6. Has your country developed methodologies to advance the integration of traditional forest - related knowledge into sustainable forest management, in accordance with Article 8(j)? (Work Programme, paragraph 14)	

a) no	
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	X
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not applicable	
7. Has your country promoted cooperation on the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological resources at all levels in accordance with Articles 5 and 16 of the Convention? (Work Programme, paragraph 15)	
a) no	
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	X
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	X
d) not applicable	
8. Has your country promoted the sharing of relevant technical and scientific information on networks at all levels of protected forest areas and networking modalities in all types of forest ecosystems? (Work Programme, paragraph 17)	
a) no	
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	X
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not applicable	

**Programme element 2: Comprehensive analysis of the ways in which human activities, in particular forest-management practices, influence biological diversity and assessment of ways to minimize or mitigate negative influences**

9. Has your country promoted activities for an enhanced understanding of positive and negative human influences on forest ecosystems by land-use managers, policy makers, scientists and other relevant stakeholders ) (Work Programme, paragraph 29)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	X
d) not relevant	
10. Has your country promoted activities to assemble management experiences and scientific, indigenous and local information at the national and local levels to provide for the sharing of approaches and tools that lead to improved forest practices with regard to forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 30)	
a) minimal activity	

b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	X
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	
11. Has your country promoted activities with the aim of providing options to minimize or mitigate negative and to promote positive human influences on forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 31)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	X
d) not relevant	
12. Has your country promoted activities to minimize the impact of harmful alien species on forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 32)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	X
13. Has your country identified means and mechanisms to improve the identification and prioritisation of research activities related to influences of human activities, in particular forest management practices, on forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 33)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	X
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	
14. Does your country hold research results and syntheses of reports of relevant scientific and traditional knowledge on key forest biological diversity issues and, if so, have these been disseminated as widely as possible? (Work Programme, paragraph 34)	
a) not relevant	
b) some relevant material, but not widely disseminated	X
c) significant material that could be more widely disseminated (please give details below)	
d) yes - already widely disseminated (please give details below)	

15. Has your country prepared case-studies on assessing impacts of fires and alien species on forest biological diversity and their influences on the management of forest ecosystems and savannahs? (Work Programme, paragraph 35)	
a) no - please indicate below whether this is due to a lack of available case-studies or for other reasons	X
b) yes - please give below any views you may have on the usefulness of the preparation of case-studies for developing a better biological understanding of the problem and/or better management responses.	

**Programme element 3: Methodologies necessary to advance the elaboration and implementation of criteria and indicators for forest biological diversity**

16. Has your country assessed experiences gained in national and regional processes, identifying common elements and gaps in existing initiatives and improving indicators for forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 43)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes - limited assessment made (please give details below)	
c) yes - significant assessment made (please give details below)	X
d) not relevant	
17. Has your country carried out taxonomic studies and inventories at the national level which provide for a basic assessment of forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 43)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes - limited assessment made (please give details below)	
c) yes - significant assessment made (please give details below)	X
d) not relevant	

***If you have ticked any of the boxes in questions 5 to 17 above which invite you to provide further details, please do so here.***

***(Information can include descriptions of methodologies and of activities undertaken, reasons for success or failure, outcomes and lessons learned)***



On 5. The principles of sustainability, of multiple functions and uses of the forest resources, of economy and social benefit are the baseline for forest management in Greece, where commercial plantations rarely exist. However, as stated in the Operational Programme for the Countryside, improvements will have to be made to the guidelines for the elaboration of forest management plans, new guidelines will be elaborated to accommodate species ecological demands in sites of specific biodiversity value and funding will be made available for the management of forest ecosystems of both commercial and non commercial value.

On 6. Work on methodology has been limited but projects concerning National Forest Parks and other forest protected areas have contributed significantly to this aim.

On 8. Co-operation has improved to a significant extend in the national context, in the sense of identifying common policies of different sectors affecting forest ecosystems between the Ministries of Agriculture, Environment, Physical Planning and Public works, Public Order and National Economy. At the local level of implementation, there is involvement of Forest -Co-operatives, Local Forestry Units and Forest Directorates as well as the Fire Brigade. Co-operation within the European context has been continuous (EU policies and Ministerial Conferences of Helsinki and Lisbon) as well as work in the OECD and FAO. The transfer of technology has had a limited application, with the exception of European Union projects.

On 9, Laws governing the protection and management of forest ecosystems in Greece provide a strong framework for the prevention of negative impacts of human activities. Existing pressures have been identified in the report on CRITERIA AND INDICATORS OF SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANGEMENT. Environmental impact assessment on projects likely to affect forests have been obligatory since the 1980's.

On 10. Activities aiming at assembling management experiences were carried out by individual researchers, Institutions and NGOs. This type of work concerns protected forest areas, areas of reforestation of agricultural land, and management of productive natural forests. Information published has led to the recognition of a need for improving tools and has been incorporated in the Operational Programs for Rural development (2001-2001). However, no official network was operated which could justify another answer.

On 11. Activities aiming at providing options to minimise or mitigate negative and to promote positive human influence on forest biological diversity have been identified in the documentation of several sites of the protected areas network. A comprehensive system of Environmental impact assessment contributes substantially to the prevention or mitigation of negative effects of projects also in forest ecosystems. The elaboration of the National Forest Cadastre which is under way is also a significant tool to this end.

On 13. Within the existing means and mechanisms, priorities on research have been identified in the field of fire and disease prevention, on habitat classification, on protected species distribution and population, the identification of biodiversity indexes.

On 15. There are several results of individual research work on fires, but they have not been elaborated to be presented as case- studies under this point. Work on alien species has been minimal as this

problem is not relevant to an important extend in Greece.

On16. This type of work is included in the report in CRITERIA AND INDICATORS FOR THE SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN GREECE.

On 17. Work on habitat classification and mapping has been almost completed, relevant data bases on species exist and are regularly updated. More work is anticipated in the field of indicators and species distribution and abundance.