

★ **SELINA** ★
SCIENCE FOR EVIDENCE-BASED
AND SUSTAINABLE DECISIONS
ABOUT NATURAL CAPITAL

Country Fact Sheet **GREECE**

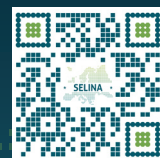


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Country Fact Sheet: Greece (GR)

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If you feel there are ongoing or upcoming research projects, policy initiatives or legislations, concerning the use of biodiversity, ecosystem condition and ecosystem services knowledge in decisions and policies, missing please contact inge.lieken@vito.be and we update the country fact sheet (until March 2027)

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Update on projects concerning biodiversity, ecosystem condition and ecosystem services assessment and accounting since 2022

In 2023 (and ongoing) the national monitoring project for the Natura 2000 species and habitat types started, organised by the Ministry of Environment and Energy and performed by various scientific organisations and experts (e.g. universities, scientific institutions). Data from this project were used in the past to create experimental accounts for ecosystem condition (using biodiversity attributes, structure data, abiotic data). An example of how this project can contribute into ecosystem condition assessments is highlighted in the JRC Publication “EU-wide methodology to map and assess ecosystem condition” (Vallecillo et al. 2022).

In 2022 (and ongoing) Greece and the Hellenic Statistical Authority, via the University of Patras, participates in the ESA Project “Pioneering Earth Observation Applications for the Environment - Ecosystem Accounting” (PEOPLE-EA). The main objective of the PEOPLE (Pioneering Earth Observation Applications for the Environment) Ecosystem Accounting project (PEOPLE-EA) is to study the relevance of Earth observa-

tions for SEEA compliant ecosystem accounting and to demonstrate its use for terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems. Greece works on a regional case study assessment on ecosystem extent, condition and ecosystem services accounts.

As a deliverable of the LIFE IP 4 NATURA project, the web-based Public Participation Geographic Information System of the LIFE-IP 4 Natura project (ppGIS/webGIS LIFE-IP 4 NATURA), presents at a national scale the ecosystem services (such as timber production, climate regulation, erosion regulation, recreation provision, etc.) that Greek ecosystems offer to the public. The ppGIS/webGIS LIFE-IP 4 NATURA was designed and developed within the framework of the LIFE-IP 4 Natura project by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki - School of Rural and Surveying Engineering, in collaboration with the University of Patras - Department of Biology, the Natural Environment and Climate Change Agency (NECCA), the Greek Ministry of Environment and Energy and WWF Greece.





Perceived barriers and needs to enhance uptake

2.1 Barriers

- No legislative base for ecosystem accounting.
- Funding is always an issue, especially for activities and assessments that are not obligatory.
- Lack of expertise and human resources is also a very important issue.

2.2 Needs

- Standardised approaches and models for ecosystem condition / ecosystem services assessments for the local scale.
- Local scale datasets and funding for field surveys and validation.
- Legislative connection of natural capital accounting with national (and regional) reporting mechanisms.



On the way to transformative change

The overall conclusion of the IPBES global assessment (IPBES 2019) was that Goals for conserving and sustainably using nature and achieving sustainability cannot be met by current trajectories, and goals for 2030 and beyond, may only be achieved through transformative changes across economic, social, political and technological factors.

Transformative or transformational change refers to “a fundamental, system-wide reorganisation

across technological, economic and social factors, including paradigms, goals and values” (IPBES, 2019). Simply said, doing things differently, rather than doing less or optimising the system.

A means to enhance uptake is bringing people of the quadruple helix together and exchange information and learn from each other. Another is to establish projects that can show that it works and lead to possible pathways of transformative change.



3.1 Community of practice

The first SELINA Community of Practice (CoP) meeting was held on the 15th of November 2023, at the University of Patras Botanical Museum. Sixty-one relevant stakeholders, from different agencies and

authorities have been invited with responsibility and/or interest in the Greek Test site area (Peloponnese (Peloponnisos), Greece.

A smaller number of invited people participated (12 persons):



ACADEMIC: University of Patras



CENTRAL GOVERNMENT: Forest Service



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE AGENCY (NECCA)

- Management Unit of Chelmos-Vouraikos National Park and Protected Areas of the Northern Peloponnese
- Management Unit of Strofyliia Wetlands National Park and Protected Areas of Western Peloponnese



REGIONAL GOVERNMENT:

- Region of Western Greece
 - Department of Regional Development and Entrepreneurship Incentives
 - Department of Regional Policy Planning and Integration of Regional Development Programme Projects
- A comprehensive and fruitful conversation was held, with results that can be summarised as follows:
 - All participating stakeholders see CoP as an important scheme / framework for communicating their respective activities and especially their implementation projects, with other agencies and authorities, as well

as with the scientific community, in order to avoid overlaps and/or delays due to similar responsibilities.

- Forest Service has data that can be useful for the SELINA project Tasks.
- CoP was identified as a means of communicating their projects outcomes to different and wider interested parties and following this, adapt their procedures to standardise data collection, registering and reporting.
- SELINA project goals presentation, and in particular the CoP targets presentation, were identified by the participants as the missing ring for a step forward, from until now administration and management to a diversified new era, that incorporates multiple (most of them already available) input from different agencies and resources.



3.2 Seeds of transformative change

Through the online survey we received 4 projects, the last project was submitted by another member state but Greece is also involved:

- **Flood prevention and rehabilitation of areas affected by natural disasters in the protected area of the Vouraikos River.**
- **Combat of *Platanus orientalis* metachromatic ulcer in areas of the Municipality of Kalavryta.**
- **Maintenance-improvement of the recreation area at the location of Taxiarches Waterfalls in Ano Vlasia.**
- **Forest map** (Cadastral project) of Greece.
- **Study circles:** As part of the Horizon 2020 project SHARED GREEN DEAL, we have 6 Streams. In one Stream – the Biodiversity Stream - so-called Study Circles were set up in which adult participants explore cultural values related to biodiversity, the loss of biodiversity and possible solutions in rural and urban areas.



Project duration: 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2027

Keywords: biodiversity, ecosystems, ecosystem services, natural capital accounting, evidence-based decision-making, transformative change

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PROJECT PARTNERS

-  Leibniz University Hannover
-  Stichting Capitals Coalition
-  Ecostack Innovations Limited
-  University of Trento
-  Pensoft Publishers
-  Centre for Ecological Research
-  Mykolas Romeris University
-  Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts
-  University of Patras
-  space4environment
-  National Institute of Geophysics, Geodesy and Geography
-  Rey Juan Carlos University
-  University of Salzburg
-  University of Bucharest
-  Flemish Institute for Technological Research
-  Foundation for Sustainable Development
-  Baltic Environmental Forum
-  Adam Mickiewicz University
-  National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and the Environment
-  Copenhagen University
-  Norwegian Institute for Natural Research
-  Estonian University of Life Sciences
-  The Cyprus Institute
-  Wageningen University
-  The Finnish Environment Institute
-  Global Change Research Institute SarVision
-  Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic
-  Gaspar Frutuoso Foundation
-  Flemish Agency for Nature and Forest
-  Municipality of Trento
-  Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania
-  Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia
-  Research Centre in Biodiversity and Genetic Resources
-  University of Haifa
-  COHAB Initiative Secretariat
-  KTH Royal Institute of Technology
-  Croatian Forest Research Institute
-  SEAcop
-  Macroplan
-  University of Reunion Island
-  Spatial Services
-  Asplan Viak
-  denkstatt
-  Wolfs Company, part of Grant Thornton
-  Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge
-  ETH Zürich
-  Joint Research Centre
-  UNEP-WCMC
-  South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute

