

Additional material

5.2.4 Key conservation measures

A set of measures and delimitation of zones are enforced since September 1996 by the Ministries of Agriculture, Environment and Development. The main zones and measures can be shortly described as follows:

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Zone A includes lakes Vistonis and Ismaris, the permanent or seasonal marshes, lagoons, a small forest near Porto Lagos and shallow coastal areas

In zone A, permitted activities (under specific terms) are: traditional fishing and aqua-culture; restricted sailing; maintenance of existing fisheries infrastructure; restricted construction of new infrastructure for aqua-culture; maintenance of existing agricultural activities, poplar plantations, salt works, existing settlements (expansion is forbidden); maintenance of archaeological sites; scientific research; management works for conservation and rehabilitation of species and habitats; daily visits (restricted to nature observation and swimming); grazing at the eastern side of Lake Vistonis; observation, study and conservation of avifauna at the forest near Porto Lagos Lagoon.

Zone B includes a peripheral zone of the parts of the places belonging to zone A and shallow coastal areas

In this zone permitted activities (under specific terms) are: maintenance of existing agricultural activities and existing settlements (expansion is forbidden), maintenance and modernisation of existing infrastructure, scientific research; works for conservation and rehabilitation of the environment; mild recreation (restricted visits for nature observation, swimming); grazing in restricted areas; small stables; aqua-culture and fishing.

Zones A and B comprise the Ramsar site

Measures have also been identified at a buffer zone in the wider / catchment area which includes mainly agricultural land and grazing fields.

In this zone, permitted activities (under specific terms) are: hunting, scientific research, agriculture, grazing and aqua-culture; maintenance and modernisation of infrastructure; establishment of light energy production; maintenance of existing archaeological sites; housing, building of storage rooms, water tanks, green houses, infrastructure for agricultural activities, athletic installations, public buildings, parking places, entertainment units, hotels; animal breeding stations and slaughter houses.

Zones A and B have been proposed for inclusion in the NATURA 2000 network under the code GR1130009. Parts of these zones are already an SPA under the code GR1130010. Within the site a game refuge has been established.

A Preliminary Management Scheme has been operating since 1997 on the site, established by Programme Agreement signed by the Ministers of Environment and Agriculture, the Regional Environmental Services and Local Authorities. It comprises a Joint Committee for the steering of the implementation, it has a flexible administration and the required secretariat /co-ordination support is provided by a Local Development Institution. The Programme Agreement has an Annex with the planned works and activities, their time-table (1996-1999) and budget. Priority actions include monitoring of water quality, visitor management (placement of signs, construction of warden houses,

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observation towers), operation of information centres training of staff and warding of this site.

Preliminary Management Schemes have a threefold aim: 1) to respond quicker to the matters that arise concerning the everyday management problems of the sites, 2) to carry out projects concerning awareness, infrastructure, monitoring and management, and 3) to co-ordinate relevant authorities in working out the further priorities for the management of the sites.

Conservation actions have been taken by the competent authorities in co-operation with the Hellenic Ornithological Society for the Heron colonies in Porto Lagos lagoons. Works for flood attenuation are in progress.

The sewage treatment station of the city of Komotini is completed therefore improving the quality of the effluents that flow into Lake Ismaris. Stations monitoring the quality of water have been established.

The site is included in the Montreux Record since 1990.