

The Greek experience on integration of Veterinary Services into a Disaster Management and Risk Reduction system

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IMPORTANT NATURAL DISASTER INCIDENTS IN GREECE 2023

1) Mega-fire of Thrace area including Dadia-Lefkimi-Soufli

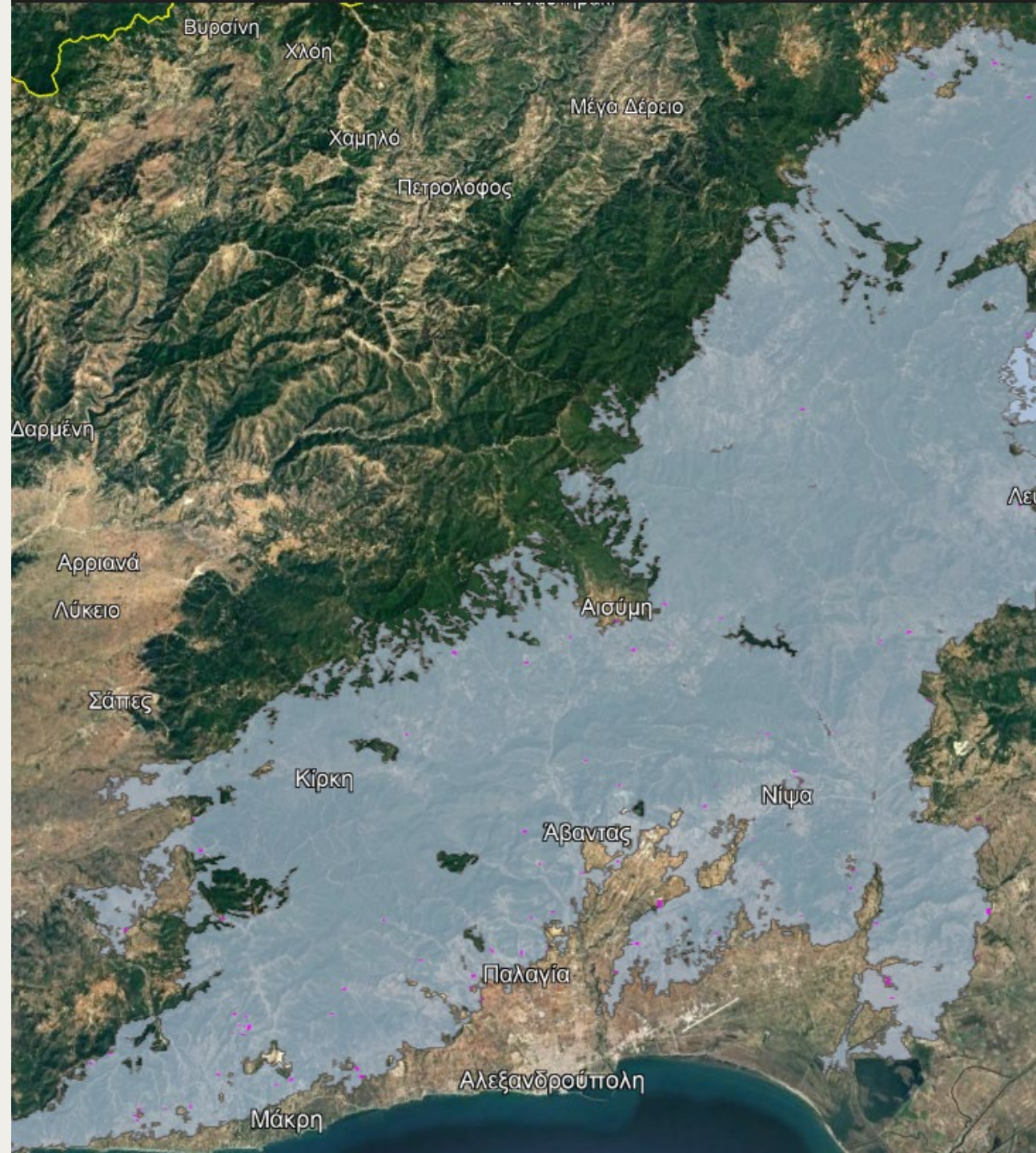
Forest National Park in Summer 2023



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IMPORTANT NATURAL DISASTER INCIDENTS IN GREECE 2023

2) “DANIEL” natural disaster

<https://www.naftemporiki.gr/society/1513474/thessalia-posa-nekra-zoa-echoyn-perisyllegei/>



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WOAH PLATFORM ACTION'S BRIDGING WORKSHOP ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND RISK REDUCTION, 17-18 JANUARY 2024, LISBON, PORTUGAL



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CIRCULAR OF THE GREEK MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD - 19 JUNE 2024

- Section for the veterinary services of the Regions and Regional Units to improve their level of preparedness in order to be able to respond to urgent needs arising in such cases.

- Section for livestock owners to protect their livestock from the consequences of possible natural disasters, in order to take appropriate prevention measures from natural disasters



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VETERINARY SERVICES (1)

- Identify the most likely sources of risk for natural disasters that threaten their jurisdiction
- Record the exact location of all live animal farms in their area of responsibility and collect information about them. A list of the above data is sent to the civil protection authorities, at the onset of natural disasters. Particular attention and priority should be given to the most remote and isolated farms.
- Contact details of the competent officials of their services, the Hellenic Police, the Coast Guard and the Fire Brigade, the municipality, private veterinarians and volunteers in their area of jurisdiction.
- Inform the farmers about the preventive measures.



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VETERINARY SERVICES (2)

- Prepare lists of licensed transporters of live animals, owners of aquifers for drinking water supply, suppliers of feed and veterinary medicines, as well as licensed slaughterhouses
- Provide places for the gathering of animals after their removal from farms following a risk assessment, taking into account the current epidemiological situation of the diseases, as well as the health status of the farm and the area where it is located.
- The animals to be moved must be directed to the nearest assembly point within the RU or, failing that, outside the RU, following the route with the lowest epidemiological risk for the spread of the diseases.



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FARMERS (1)

- Record the telephone numbers of the relevant civil protection services, the Greek police, the coast guard (where relevant), the fire brigade, private individuals, veterinary surgeons, licensed slaughterhouses and companies managing dead animals.
- Ensure the cleaning of the outdoor areas of their facility as well as the surrounding area, from dry grass and garbage and improve the drainage of rainwater.
- Ensure sufficient water, food and other necessary supplies so that they can meet the needs of the animals in the event of exclusion of the facility for a period of at least 5-7 days even without receiving external assistance.
- To be supplied with power generators and/or autonomous photovoltaic systems.
- Ensure that there is a charged mobile phone on the farm
- Have regular updates on the weather report.



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FARMERS (2)

- In the event of a fire, first inform the competent authorities (fire brigade, etc.) and then follow the other actions.
- Take the following measures in the case of seriously ill or injured animals:
 - Separation from other animals
 - First aid (wound wrapping, stopping bleeding, controlling and improving ventilation, etc.)
 - Examination and treatment by a veterinarian as soon as possible
 - Where necessary, they shall contact veterinarians and slaughterhouses to carry out emergency on-site slaughter on seriously injured animals that cannot be treated (Observance of rules to prevent the spread of diseases).
 - Separate the dead from the living animals and gather them in a separate breeding area.
- Any action to remove animals or approach farms is carried out after consultation with the local competent veterinary authorities and always under the instructions of the competent police and fire authorities.

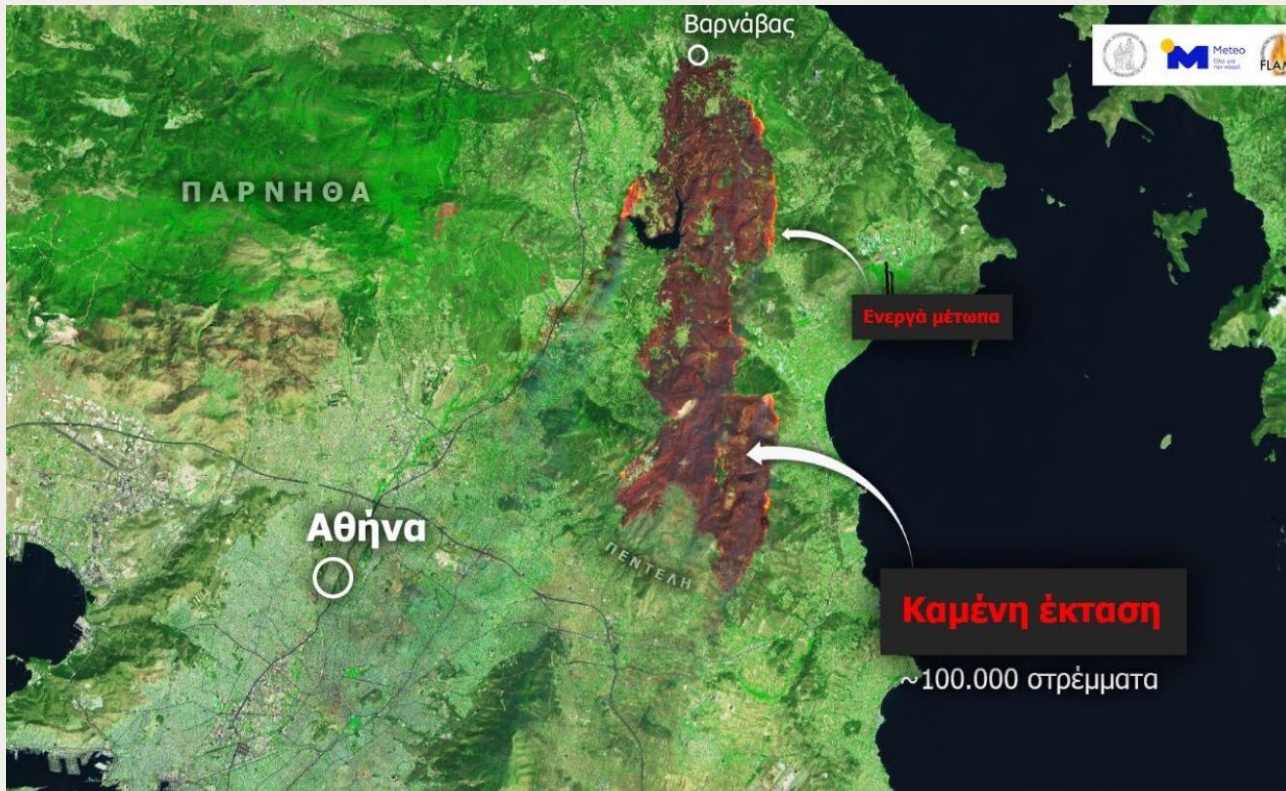


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MEGA FIRE IN ATTICA REGION



Lasted for 3 days (11- 13 August 2024) and reached the northern suburbs of Athens – inhabited urban area



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MEGA FIRE IN ATTICA REGION

The fire started on Sunday afternoon and all involved Regional Veterinary Services were contacted by the Central Competent Authority and began telephone communication with farmers in the initial area of the fire which continued early next morning while the fire had already reached the northern suburbs of Athens and more farms.

The Veterinary Services' mandate to livestock farmers was to move animals to defined open settlements, since the primary concern of the fire brigade services was to protect the villages (and not necessarily the farms) from burning. They also ordered the doors of farm buildings to remain open so that the animals could have the possibility to escape.

HINT: 1) PPR INCIDENTS IN GREECE!

2) NATIONAL LEGISLATION FOR COMPULSORY

REMOVAL OF BRANCHES IN ALL PRIVATE OPEN PROPERTIES!



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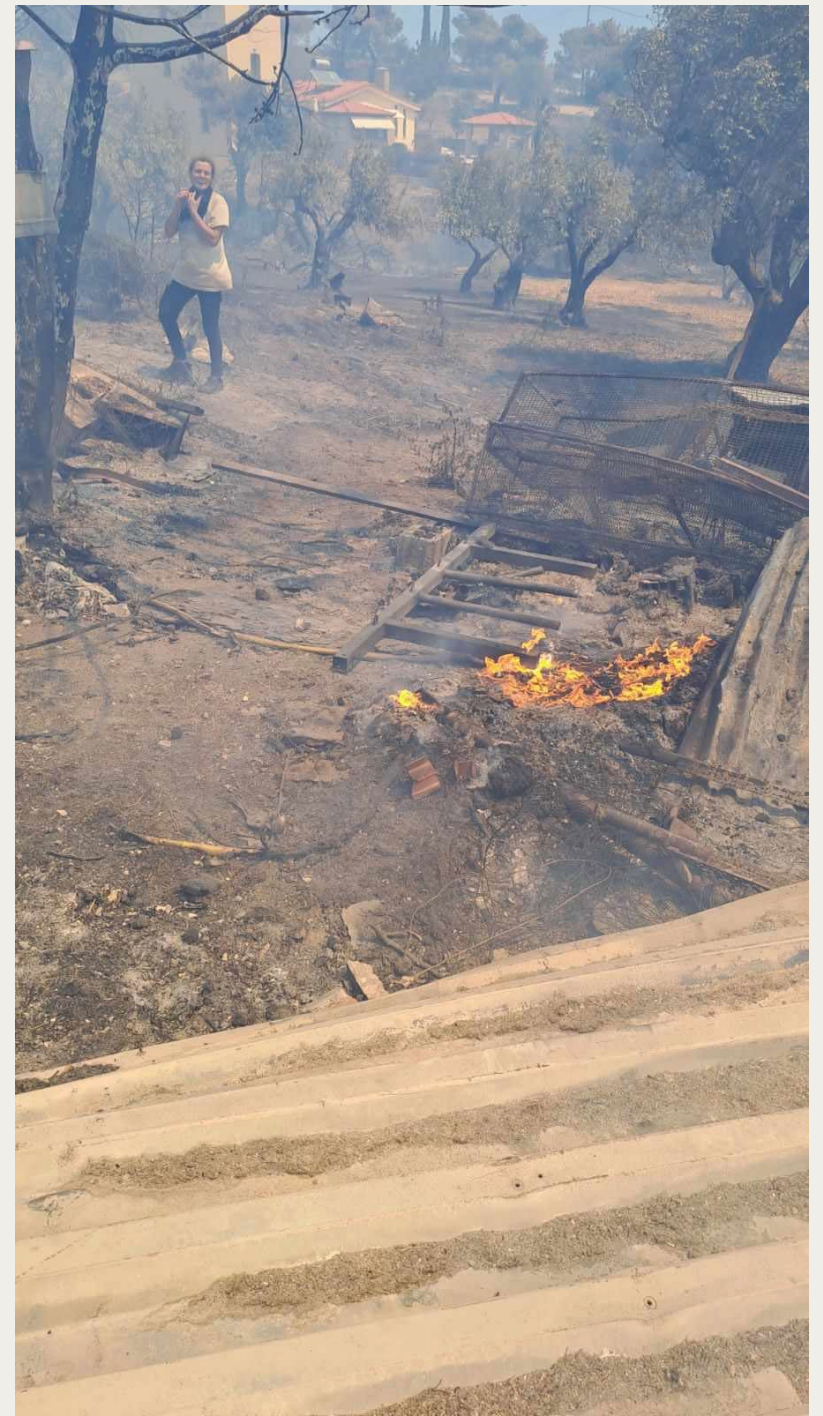
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The Regional Veterinary Services authorised the 2 farmers to move their flocks to a safer area. Both considered the area next to their farms safe, however within an hour the wind changed and the farms were burned. 60 out of 600 sheep were burned in one farm and all 100 sheep in the other. The owners were injured during the incident.

Urgent need of feeding and watering the animals

Veterinary Services reached the farms while there was still remnants of fire around with the authorisation and collaboration of the Hellenic Police and the fire brigade, which did not allow the vets pass through a road with a damaged electricity supplier for safety reasons.



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In 2 other areas close to the place where the fire started 1 other sheep farms and 93 animals were burned, whereas another farmer managed to save 200 sheep and the farm was burned.

Urgent need of feeding and watering the animals.

A third farm managed to save both the building and the animals.

In this veterinary Services visited the farms after the fire ended.



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Lessons learnt – Challenges (1)

YOU **MIGHT** HAVE SOME TIME BUT YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE ACCESS!!!!
YOU MIGHT BE TRAPPED!!!! AND HAVE NOT ENOUGH TIME TO LOAD
TO VEHICLES



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Lessons learnt – Challenges (2)

- *Feed and water is difficult to be provided to animals, especially if the farm is burned. Even if you have funds and collaboration with the municipality and feed associations need to have been predicted.*
- *Even if you have regular weather updates, if the wind direction changes suddenly, you might not have the time to further remove your flock.*



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Lessons learnt – Challenges (3)

- *The experience of Greece gained during the last 2 years and especially this summer with the launch of the implementation of the disaster management program is extremely valuable and will help improve it in the coming period..*
- *...especially with convincing that water should not only be provided to cease the fire, but taking in to account that vehicles carrying water need to reload fire brigade vehicles as well!*
- *All countries members of WOAAH susceptible to natural disasters (hot and dry climate during summertime, flooding during winter) could benefit from WOAAH guidelines and can be assisted so that WOAAH Platform on animal welfare can progress.*



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Thank you

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