Chapter 80

Exploring the Development of New Tourism Activities in the Municipality of Kerkini by Using the Area’s Natural Resources Sustainably, Municipality of Kerkini, Greece

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ABSTRACT

Work in the 354 km² Municipality of Kerkini studied ways to increase ecotourism without harming rich local biodiversity, in cooperation with government, NGOs and private stakeholders. Routes were mapped for hunting, horse-riding, walking and climbing.

INTRODUCTION

The Greek case study focuses on the Municipality of Kerkini, which lies in the northern part of Greece (Region of Central Macedonia) and is adjacent to the artificial Lake Kerkini (see Figure 1). Figure 2 gives an aerial overview of the area.

The case study area is of great significance, as it is a designated National Park since October 2005, and offers food and shelter to lots of species. In fact it is one of the most important wetlands for protection of birds in Greece, as it gives shelter to over 300 species of birds. It is also one of the 10 Greek wetlands of international importance under the Ramsar Convention and one of the 196 Important Bird Areas (IBA) in Greece. In addition, the vast majority of water buffalos in Greece live around the Kerkini Lake. In the mountains surrounding the 354 km² Municipality of Kerkini, there is a plethora of fauna and flora which are considered

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