



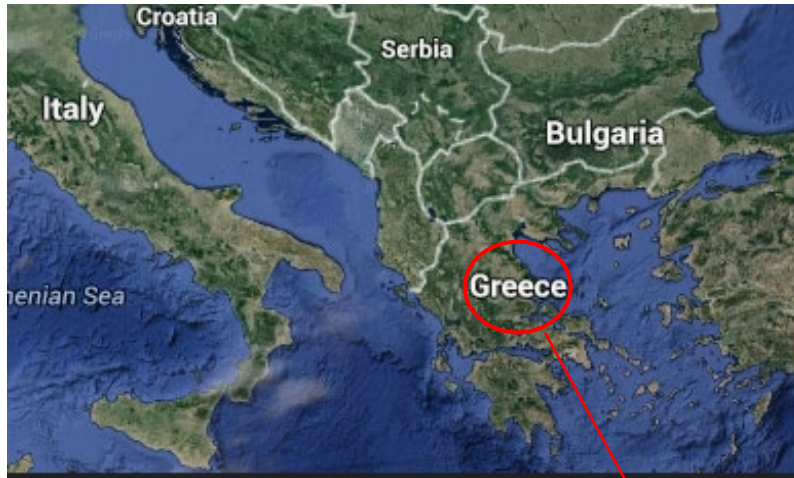
**MEDASSET**  
Mediterranean Association  
to Save the Sea Turtles

# **Agenda Item 6.1: Files opened**

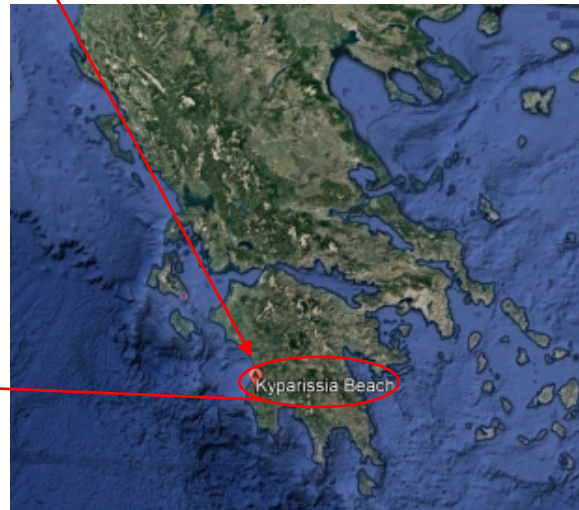
## **Greece: Threats to Marine Turtles in Thines Kiparissias**

**38<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee  
Bern Convention  
27-30 November 2018**

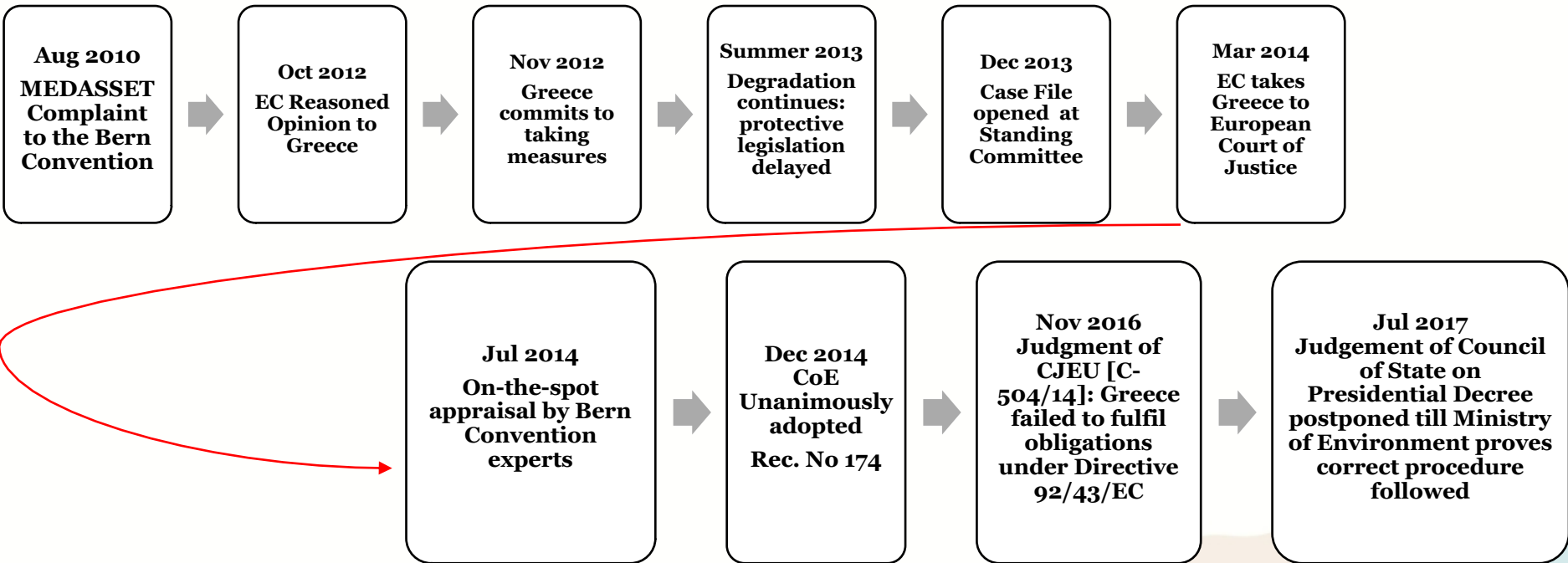
# Habitat Degradation due to Uncontrolled Development in a Protected Sea Turtle Nesting Area



- **NATURA 2000 site:** THINES KYPARISSIAS – GR2550005
- **2<sup>nd</sup> most important nesting beach** for endangered *Caretta caretta* in the Mediterranean for 6 years in a row 2013-2018 with more than 1200 nests/year. Preliminary data raise the No of nests on the 9.5km core area (Neda River to Arcadikos River)
- Extensive sand **dunes** system with **Juniperus spp**



# The issuance of the Presidential Decree



- June 2018 Approval by Council of State of the draft Presidential Decree
- October 2018 Adoption of the Presidential Decree

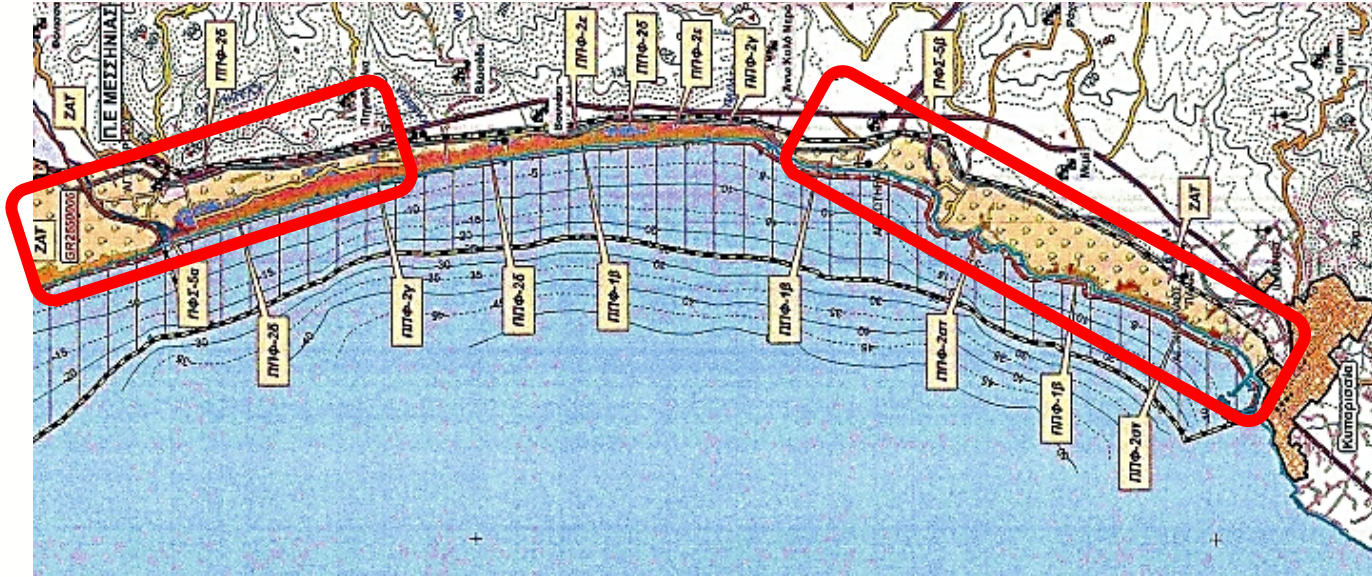
# Issuance of Presidential Decree Fails to Ensure Adequate Protection & Prevent Habitat Deterioration

- Presidential Decree for southern Kyparissia Bay was issued in October 2018 (Government Gazette D 391/03-10-2018)
- **Presidential Decree does not address several major issues** for the adequate protection of southern Kyparissia Bay & for marine turtles
- **Urgent Adoption & Implementation of a Management Plan for southern Kyparissia Bay is essential**





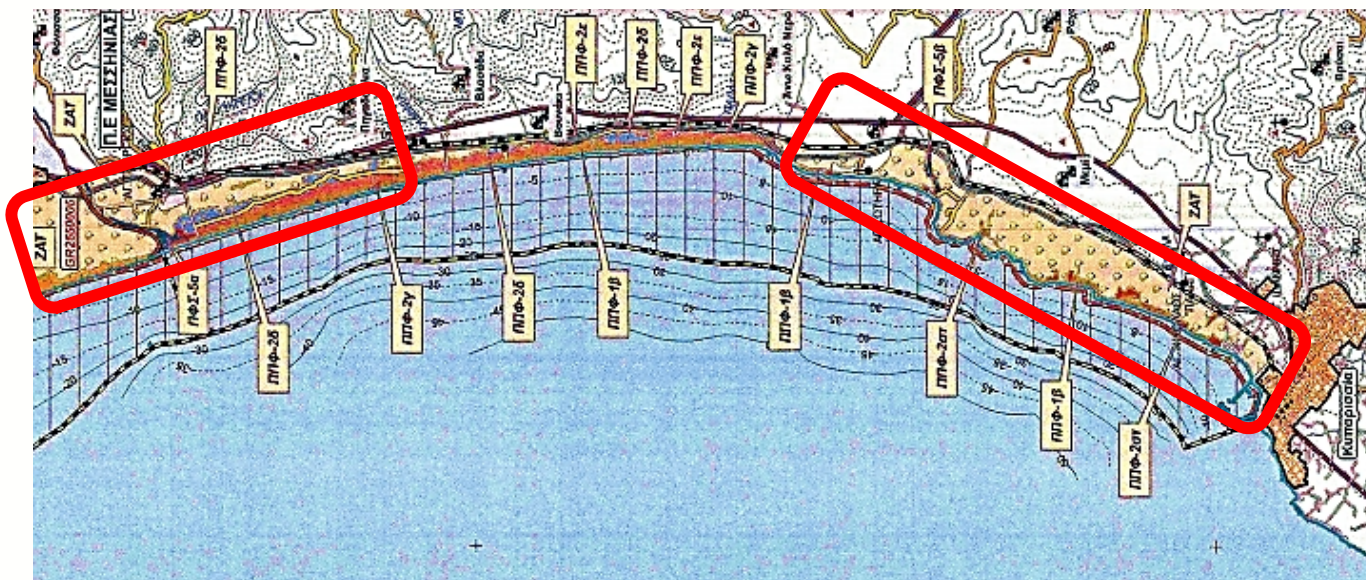
# Rec. No 174. Measure No 1: Appropriate Protection status



**Presidential Decree designates the whole area as a Nature Protected Area  
NOT as a National Park**

- All areas that were not designated as Nature Protected Areas, were designated as Agricultural Landscape Zones where **building is permitted**
- Part of the **coastal area behind the core nesting beaches (red rectangles)** were designated as Agricultural Landscape Zones, putting in **danger** the reproduction of sea turtles and jeopardising adequate protection of the site.

## Rec. No 174. Measure No 2: Permanent Prohibition of Construction (buildings, roads, etc.)



### Presidential Decree fails to adequately protect Kyparissia Bay from construction:

- Except from a small area, the entire sand **dune ecosystem behind the core nesting area** is designated as Agricultural Landscape Zone where **construction is permitted (red rectangles)**.
- **No buffer zone** between Nature Protected Area & Agr. Landscape Zone
- No description of legally existing **road network**





# Rec. No 174. Measure No 3: Restoration of Original Dune and Forest Habitat



**Motor cross race in May 2018, with 280 motorbikes in the sand dunes and on nesting beach**



**Illegal roads & destruction of sand dunes**



**Illegal roads & dune destruction. Vehicles accessed dunes & nesting beach on a daily basis**

No restoration work took place & new illegal actions resulted in further damage of the sand dunes



## Rec. No 174. Measure No 4: Adjustments to existing buildings



**Destruction of dune vegetation because of garden creation works**

No actions to reinstate the previous dune ecosystem in houses built within the vicinity of nesting areas



**Destruction of dune vegetation because of garden creation works**



# Rec. No 174. Measures 3&4: Complementary evidence of illegal actions



**Vehicles & vehicle tracks on the nesting beach**



**Vehicles on the nesting beach**



# Rec. No 174. Measure No 5: No agriculture on public land & the dune area



**Animal grazing & cultivation of  
watermelons/vegetables  
continues on the dune area**

**Cultivation of watermelons near Kalo Nero  
nesting beach**





## Rec. No 174. Measure No 6: Photo-Pollution reduction



### Intense light pollution on Kalo Nero nesting beach

**NGO Archelon's repeated appeals to the municipality to temporarily turn off public & private lights in Kalo Nero were ignored**



## Rec. No 174. Measure No 7: Beach Equipment management



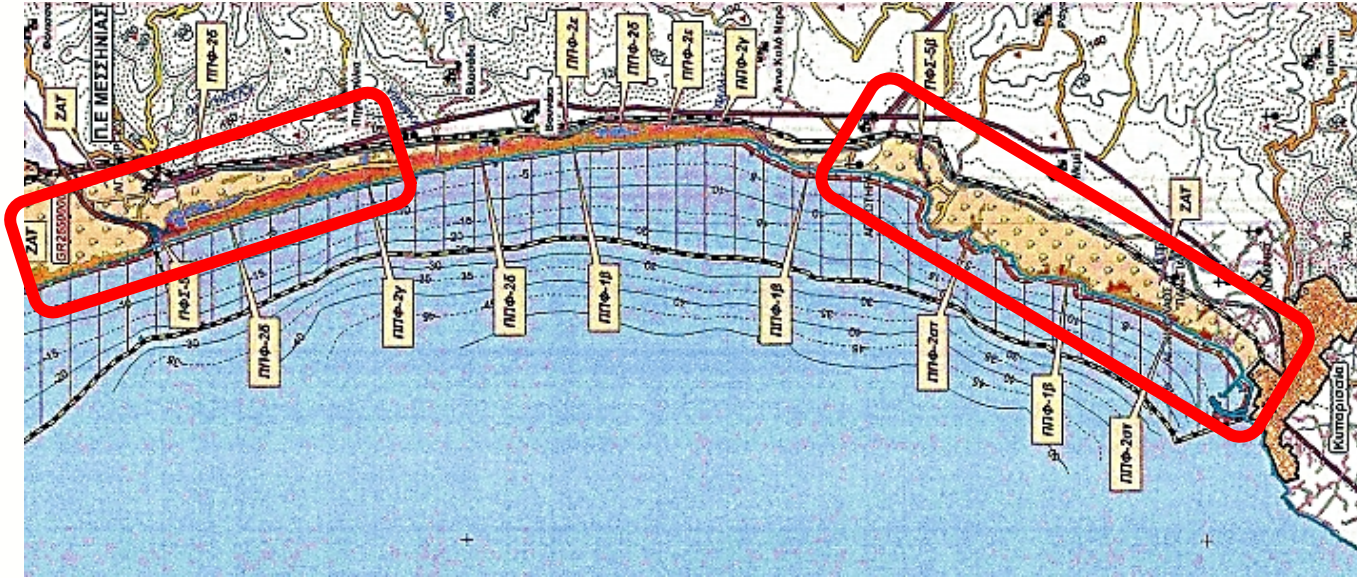
**Canteens on the nesting beach**

**Illegal platforms & beach furniture completely cover nesting areas in Kalo Nero**

**The beach furniture in Kalo Nero was never removed at night during the entire 2018 nesting season**



## Rec. No 174. Measure No 9: Further building outside the urban-planning areas



- **Presidential Decree does not allow the expansion of settlements into Nature Protection Areas**
- **However, the Presidential Decree fails to adequately secure the nesting areas as the designation of part of the coastal area behind the core nesting beaches as an Agricultural Landscape Zone permits:**
  - a. Hotels to cover 20 ha & a max. capacity of 120 beds (height 7.5 (+1.5) m)
  - b. Buildings & Landscape can cover max. 30%
  - c. Buildings min. 50 m from nesting beach and >50 m from sand dune zone
  - d. Installation of buildings min. 15 m from plot boundaries
  - e. For existing buildings, hotels can cover 10 ha & max. capacity of 60 beds





## **Rec. No 174. Measure No 10: Regulate navigation of vessels, assess fishing practices**



**By-caught sea turtle**

**Fishing with nets near the nesting beach is currently permitted leading both adult sea turtles & hatchlings to be caught during the reproductive season**



**15 dead turtles found during nesting season**



## Rec. No 174. Measure No 11: Human presence on the nesting beach at night



**Camping & caravans on the coastal road of Kalo Nero, behind the nesting area**

- **No measures taken to prevent human presence on the beach at night**
- **No signs installed to warn visitors about access restrictions**



**Tents & shelters on the nesting beach (between Agiannakis & Elaia). Equipment was not removed at night.**



**Rec. No 174. Measure No 12:**  
Control of feral or stray dogs

- No dog attacks were recorded during 2018 but 9 dead turtles were found by interaction with fisheries

**Rec. No 174. Measure No 8:**  
Sand & Gravel Extraction

- Sand and gravel extraction has not been a significant issue during the 2018 season



# Conclusion

## **Rec. No 174 has not been implemented**

- The issued Presidential Decree for Kyparissia Bay (Government Gazette D 391/0310-2018) constitutes a positive development
- Several major conservation issues are not addressed by the Decree which can only be **resolved through the adoption of a Management Plan before May 2019**
- Threats identified led to habitat degradation, destruction of nests, unsuccessful nesting attempts & mortality of hatchlings & adult turtles





# MEDASSET:

## Calls on the Greek Government to:

- Urgently adopt & implement a **Management Plan**, with the active engagement of the competent Management Agency of Kotychi, Strofilia Lagoon & Kyparissia Bay
- Keep the Standing Committee informed about the **progress in the implementation of the above** recommendations

## Calls on the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention to:

- **Keep the case file open**
- **Continue following up with the Greek Government** regarding progress made on the implementation of Rec. No 174





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# **Agenda Item: 6.1: Files opened Greece: Threats to Marine Turtles in Thines Kiparissias**



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