

Promoting awareness of wildlife crime prosecution and liability for biodiversity damage in NATURA 2000 areas in Crete



LIFE Natura Themis

LIFE14 GIE/GR/000026

LIFE 2021 Networking Event & Final Conference LIFE Cyclamen

November 3, 2021

Virtual Event



“LIFE Natura Themis: Actions & Results”



Dr. Michalis Probonas, UoC – NHMC
Coordinator of LIFE Natura Themis project

The LIFE14 GIE/GR/000026 project is funded at a percentage of 60% from the LIFE financial instrument “Environmental Governance & Information” of the European Commission / EASME, while a part of the Associated Beneficiaries own funds was covered by the Greek Green Fund.



PROJECT LOCATION: Crete, GREECE

BUDGET INFO:

Total budget: €1,580,117

% EU Contribution: €935,782 (59.22%)



DURATION: Start date: 01/10/2015 - End date: 30/06/2021

PROJECT BENEFICIARIES:

Coordinating Beneficiary: University of Crete (UoC)

Associated Beneficiaries:

1. Chania Bar Association (CB)
2. Heraklion Bar Association (HB)
3. Ministry of Environment & Energy (MoEE) – Coordination Office for the Implementation of Environmental Liability (COIEL)
4. Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature (HSPN)



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OBJECTIVES & AIMS:

1. Inform and raise awareness about **environmental and wildlife crime**.
2. Inform and raise awareness about **environmental liability** for preventing and remediating biodiversity damage.
3. **Change the attitude** of stakeholders, targeted audience and lay public in Crete that their support and engagement in **EU environmental law enforcement** is an important tool to **protect biodiversity** and **support local development and social cohesion**.
4. Provide stakeholders and target audiences with the **appropriate skills for being engaged in effective prosecution procedure regarding wildlife crime**, for requiring measures for the **remediation of biodiversity damage** and for integrating biodiversity issues in regional and local policy.
5. Communicate regarding the role and **importance of the implementation of EU environmental legislation** in human well-being in NATURA 2000 (N2000) Network to other N2000 site managers in Greece.



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MAIN PROJECT ACTIONS:

The **main project actions** and means involved to reach the project objectives were:

- ❖ Establishment of **2 Environmental Law Observatories**, in East and West Crete, respectively.
- ❖ **Awareness raising activities** such as workshops, conferences and Application for Smart Devices.
- ❖ **Training Seminars** to develop specific skills to stakeholders.
- ❖ Production of **4 Technical Guides**.
- ❖ Usage of **project website and local media** as tools towards environmental awareness.
- ❖ **Development of indicators** for the evaluation of the project effectiveness.



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Environmental Law Observatories

The 2 **Environmental Law Observatories** are innovative structures that were created within the framework of the LIFE Natura Themis project and are being implemented by the 2 Bar Associations of Crete (Bar Associations of Chania & Heraklion, respectively).



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- ✓ **Environmental Law Observatory (ELO) in East Crete** started in September 2016 and it has been in full operation since **January 2017**. It is being operated by the **Heraklion Bar Association (HB)**.
- ✓ **Environmental Law Observatory (ELO) in West Crete** started in September 2016 and it has been in full operation since **November 2016**. It is being operated by the **Chania Bar Association (CB)**.
- Every 4 months, the team of both ELOs **checked and registered all published bills, acts, laws, technical regulations, ministerial or administrative decisions, and public contracts** referring to direct or indirect environmental management of the NATURA 2000 protected areas of Crete.
- In addition, **analysis and compilation** of cases already registered took place at a permanent basis.
- **Contacts** with stakeholders, targeted audiences and local community were made on a permanent basis.



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Geo-information Map

The database with the registered environmental cases that both ELOs collected was connected with the official project website, in where they were presented in a geo-information map.

The geo-information map shows the prosecuting cases for wildlife crimes that took place within the N2000 protected areas of Crete.

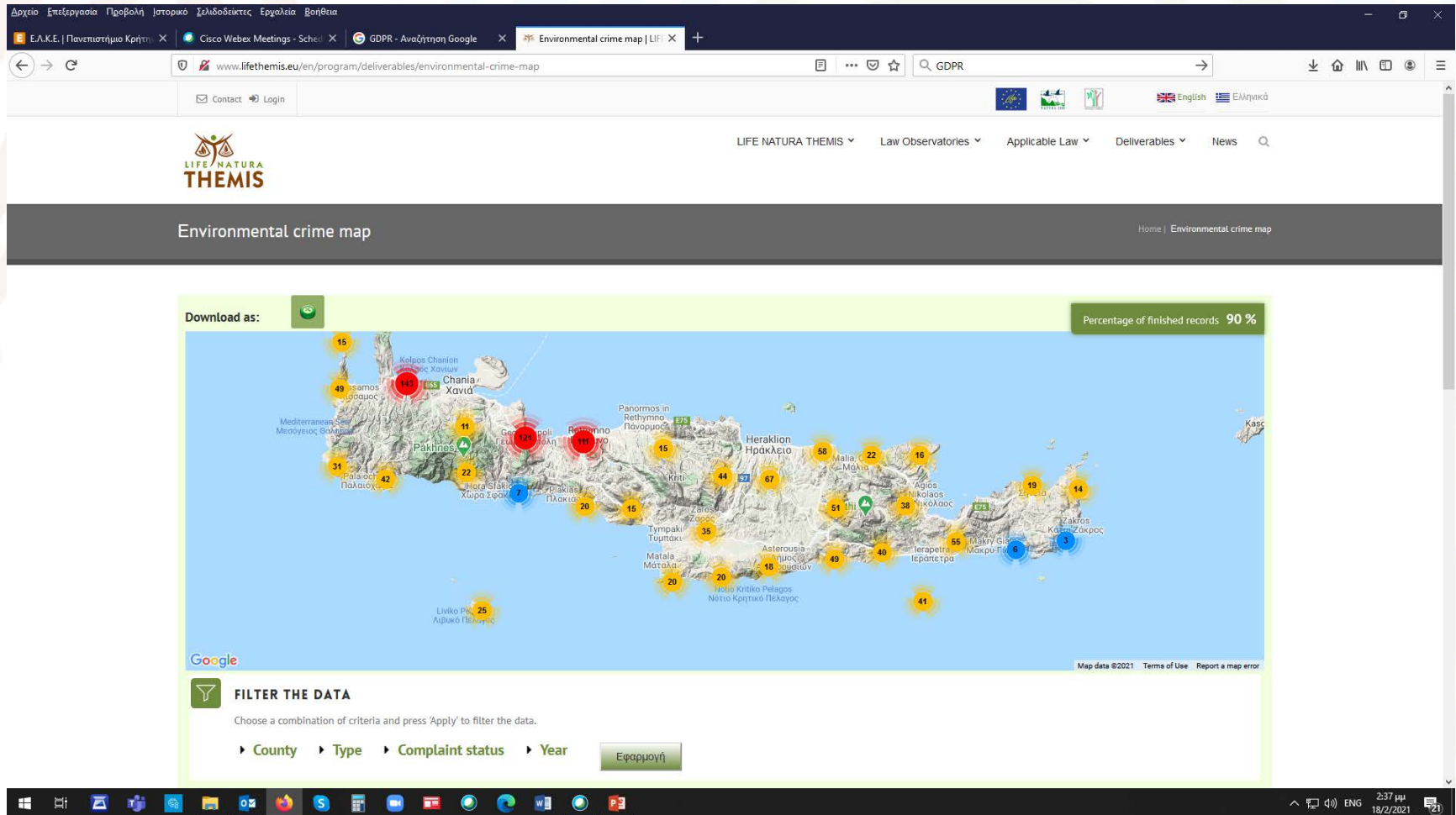
- The **marking of sites** was done approximately (due to restrictions of the General Data Protection Regulation [GDPR]).
- For ensuring the confidentiality and protection of perpetrators' personal data, **a permit has been obtained** from the competent Personal Data Protection Authority.
- The communicated information was kept in a written form at UoC.
- Following a review of criminal records of pre-investigation services and court decisions, environmental crimes and violations **were posted without reference to the accused / perpetrator**.



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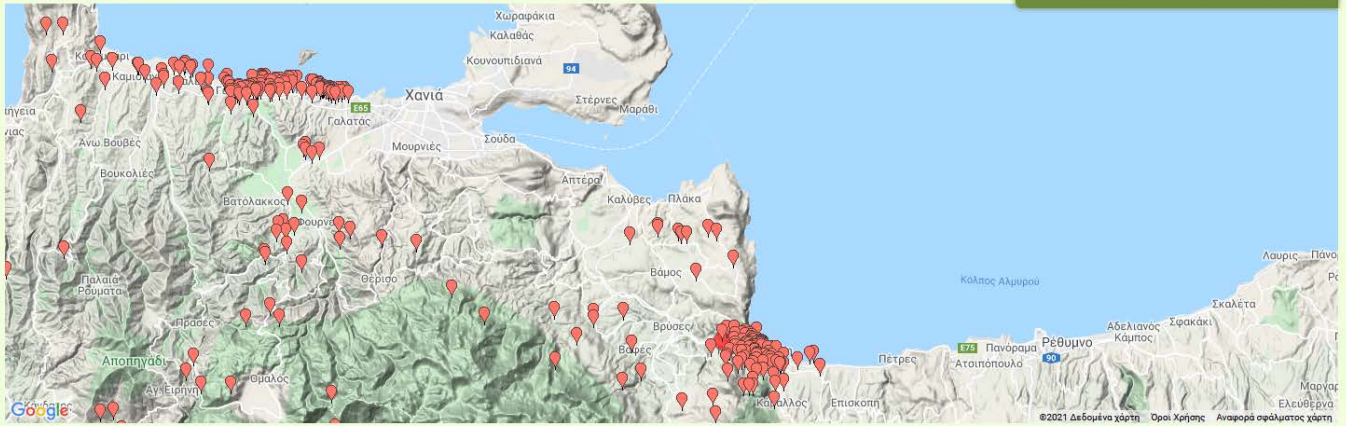
Αρχείο Επεξεργασία Προβολή Ιστορικό Σελιδοδείκτες Εργαλεία Βοήθεια

Google | Γενική Γραμματεία Πληρωφ | ΤαξίαNET | Post Attendee - Zoom | HELECOS 10 - 10ο Πανελλήνιο | Μετάφραση Google | ΕΡΓΟ LIFE PROHIBIT | Γεωπληροφορικός χάρτης | Χάρτες Google

www.lifethemis.eu/el/program/deliverables/environmental-crime-map

LIFE NATURA THEMIS | Παρατηρητήρια Δικαίου | Εφαρμοζόμενο Δίκαιο | Παραδοτέα | Νέα

Κατέβασμα ως:  Ποσοστό καταγεγραμμένων περιστατικών: **100 %**



Φιλτράρετε τα δεδομένα
Διαλέξτε ένα συνδυασμό κριτηρίων και πατήστε το κουμπί 'Εφαρμογή' για να φιλτράρετε τα δεδομένα.

▼ **Νομός** ▶ **Τύπος** ▶ **Στάδιο** ▶ **Έτος** **Εφαρμογή**

Επιλογή όλων

☒ **Χανιά**

☐ Ηράκλειο

☐ Λασιθί

☐ Ρέθυμνο

Αποτελέσματα
Εμφάνιση / Απόκρυψη Αποτελεσμάτων

Ανακοίνωση νομικού περιεχομένου

26°C Γενικά ήλιοφάν. 14:06 15/10/2021

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It is believed that the geo-information map opens a new era in the field of prosecution, prevention and repression of “green” crime, since it may assists in:

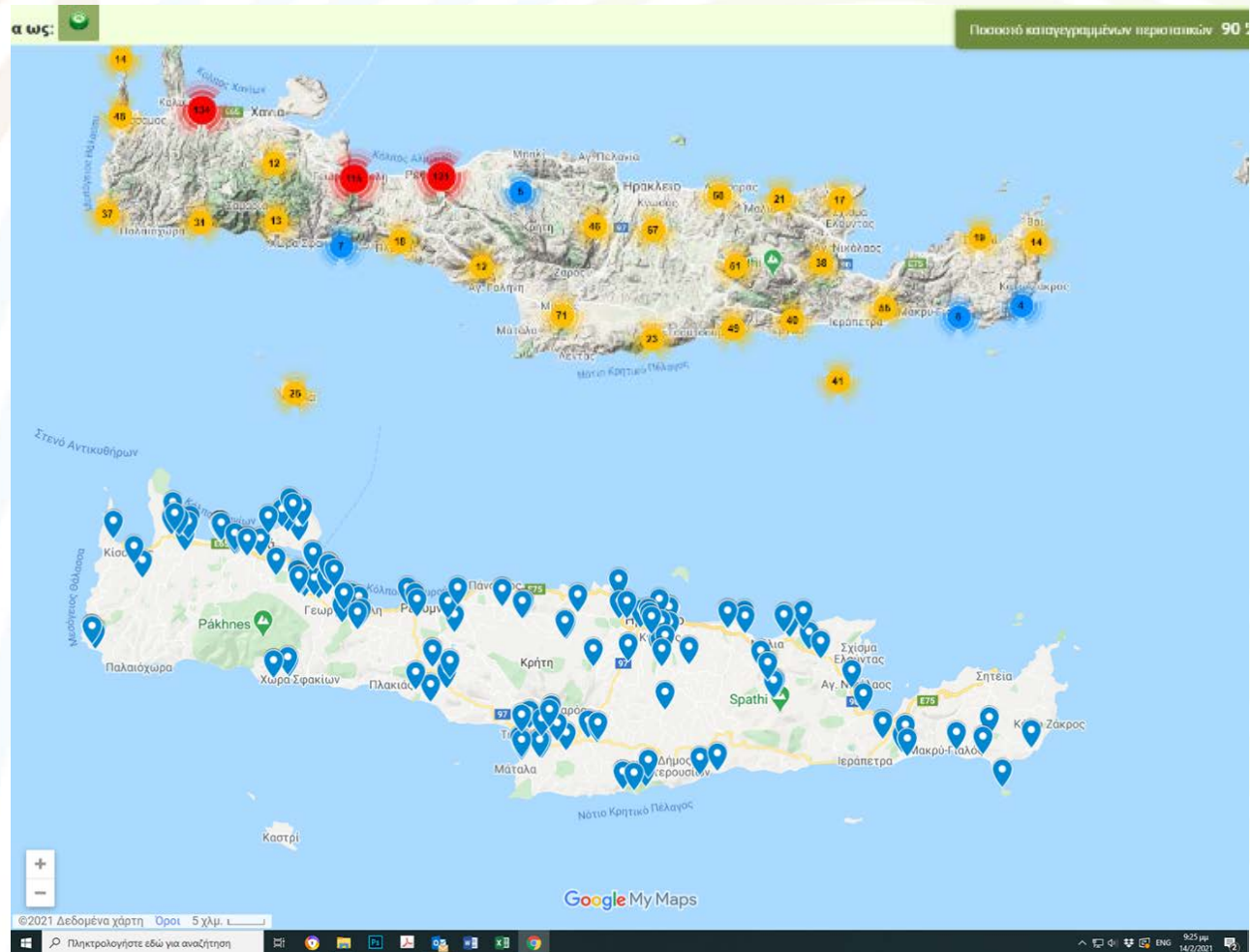
- ✓ **better planning** of environmental auditing;
 - ✓ **qualitative and quantitative assessment** of green crime;
 - ✓ **prediction** of green crime’s commission;
 - ✓ **interdepartmental cooperation** in law enforcement; and
 - ✓ **sensitization** of local communities and **effective** case prosecution.
- ✓ Especially if it is used in combination or supplementary with the Application’s map for anonymous complaints (**LIFE THEMIS Application**, *see next slides*), which generally seems to coincide in terms of the characterization of the “crime hotspots”, it will **multiply the effectiveness** of preventing and suppressing environmental crimes and/or violations.



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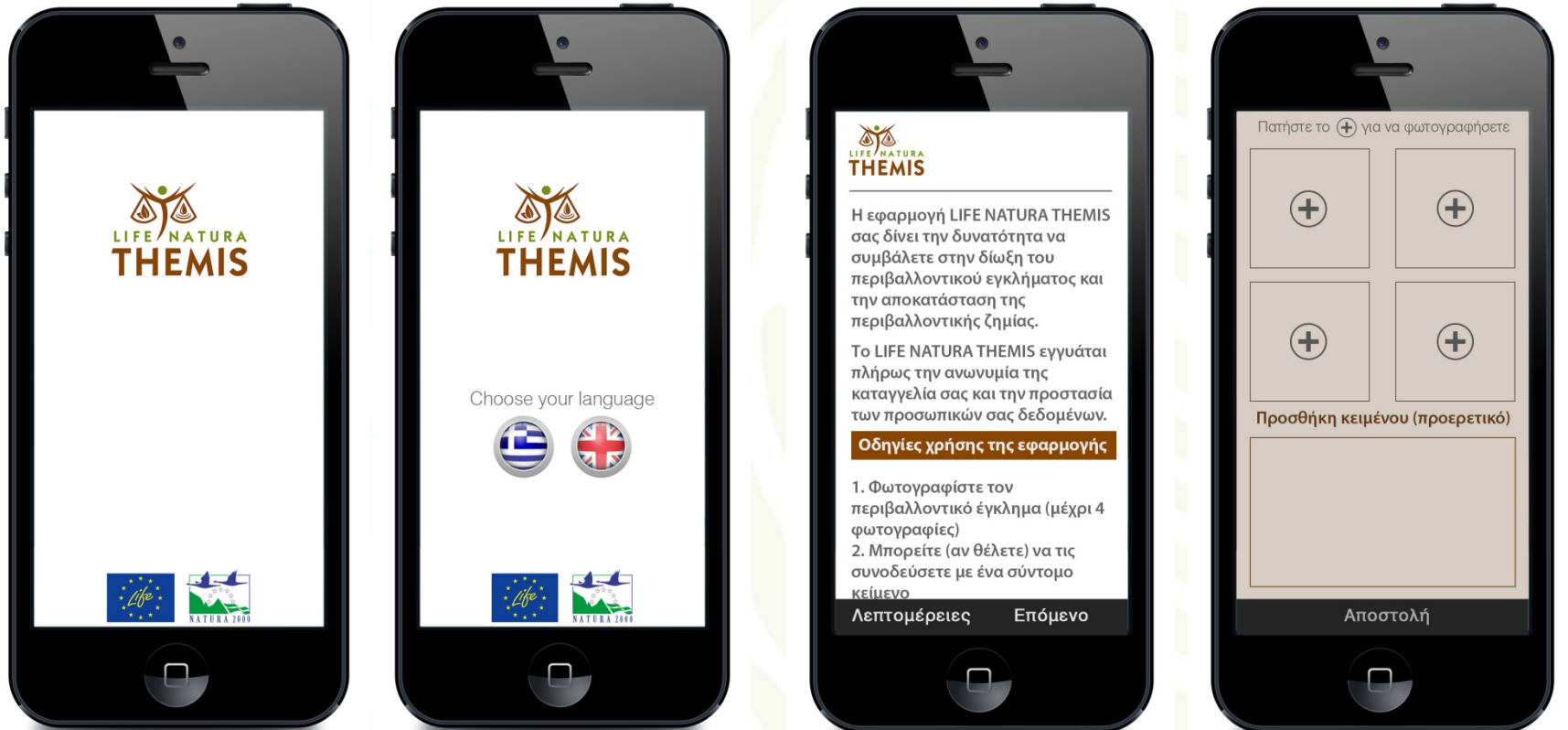
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Smart Devices Application (LIFE Themis APP)



Smart Devices Application (LIFE Themis APP)

In the framework of LIFE Natura Themis project, an **Application for Smart Devices** (mobiles, tablets, etc.) was created for facilitating citizens to report an environmental crime.

The use of such a tool was deemed necessary as citizens avoid to report incidents of environmental degradation or environmental crime for 3 basic reasons, e.g.

- **Fear of retaliation or targeting**, if they make a personal complaint.
- **Money and time spent** for the complaint.
- **Involvement** with authorities, police and/or courts.

The Application gives citizens the possibility to report an environmental crime anonymously, in real time and with all necessary details:

- exact place of the crime (use of device's geo-reference system, mandatory);
- evidence with photographs (mandatory) or text (optional).



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Smart Devices Application (LIFE Themis APP)

- ✓ Fully functional since **August 2017**; freely available and covers only Crete.
- ✓ **1,900** Users have downloaded the App.; **381** of them are still **active** (209 Android / 172 iOS).
- ✓ **271** reports have been received so far (August 2017 – May 2021).
- ✓ **187** Reports were valid and forwarded to competent authorities.
- ✓ **26** Cases has been successfully dealt with and the damage was restored.
- ✓ A **fine of €2,000.00** was imposed in one of these reports.
- ✓ In **2** reports, the cases reached the Courts or the perpetrator was identified.

Invalid reports are mainly due to:

- **position inaccuracy** due to poor connection of the device to satellites;
- **inaccuracy in depicting a crime** (photos of bad quality or pictures captured far from the crime's place or controversial illustration of the problem);
- **irrelevant violation** with an environmental crime (e.g. photos from waste outside bins);
- **clear intent to deceive** (reports with photos from internet and geolocation from users' house!).



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17/2/2021 Themis - Εφαρμογές στο Google Play

Google Play Αναζήτηση

Οι εφαρμογές μου

Αγορά

Παιχνίδια

Οικονομικά

Επιλογή συντακτών

Λογαριασμός

Τρόποι πληρωμής

Play Points Νέα

Οι συνδρομές μου

Εξαργύρωση

Αγορά δωροκάρτας

Η λίστα επιθυμιών μου

Η δραστηριότητά μου

Οδηγός για γονείς

Themis
Sotiris Paleologou Εκπαίδευση
PEGI 3
Αυτή η εφαρμογή είναι διαθέσιμη για τη συσκευή σας.

Εγκαταστήστε

Η εφαρμογή αυτή δημοσιεύθηκε στο πλαίσιο του έργου LIFE14 GIE/GR/000026 - LIFE Natura Themis.

Σκοπός του έργου είναι να αναδείξει την ελλειπή εφαρμογή του Περιβαλλοντικού Δικαιού ως ενός κρίσιμου παράγοντα που συντελεί σημαντικά στην υιοθέτηση και υλοποίηση των μέτρων προστασίας. Το έργο επιδιώκει, σε σκοπείο να τεκμηριώσει ότι η ερήθ εφαρμογή του Περιβαλλοντικού Δικαιού προάγει την ορθή χρήση των φυσικών πόρων, την τοπική ανάπτυξη και

ΔΙΑΒΑΣΤΕ ΠΕΡΙΣΣΟΤΕΡΑ

ΚΡΙΤΙΚΕΣ

Εκτελεστική κοινότητα επί τη δημοσίευσή

Γράψτε μια κριτική

4,8

5 αστέρια 3

4 αστέρια 4

3 αστέρια 3

2 αστέρια 2

1 αστέρια 1

Stella Pel
★★★★★ 16 Δεκεμβρίου 2018
"αντικείμενο, αλλά στη χρήση και... Τόσο με τόσο χρήσιμο. Συμμετέχοντας"

Vasi Ili
★★★★★ 4 Μαρτίου 2020
"ως με παρά να απεχθάνομαι τα στοιχεία του έργο έργο, αρθρογράφος"

Τίτος Βαβούρης
★★★★★ 25 Φεβρουαρίου 2019
"το θέμα είναι πολύ ενδιαφέρον"

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=gr.naturathemis.app&hl=el>

1/3



QR for Android



QR for iOS

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THEMIS APP is:

- ✓ Easy to use and functional for beginners and more experienced users.

Way to use:

- Activation of geospatial data system of each device.
- Application activation.
- Take photos.
- Write a message with relevant commentary (not necessarily)..
- Contact details (if the user wishes).
- Send the complaint.



Anonymity is guaranteed of the complainant, if wishes so!



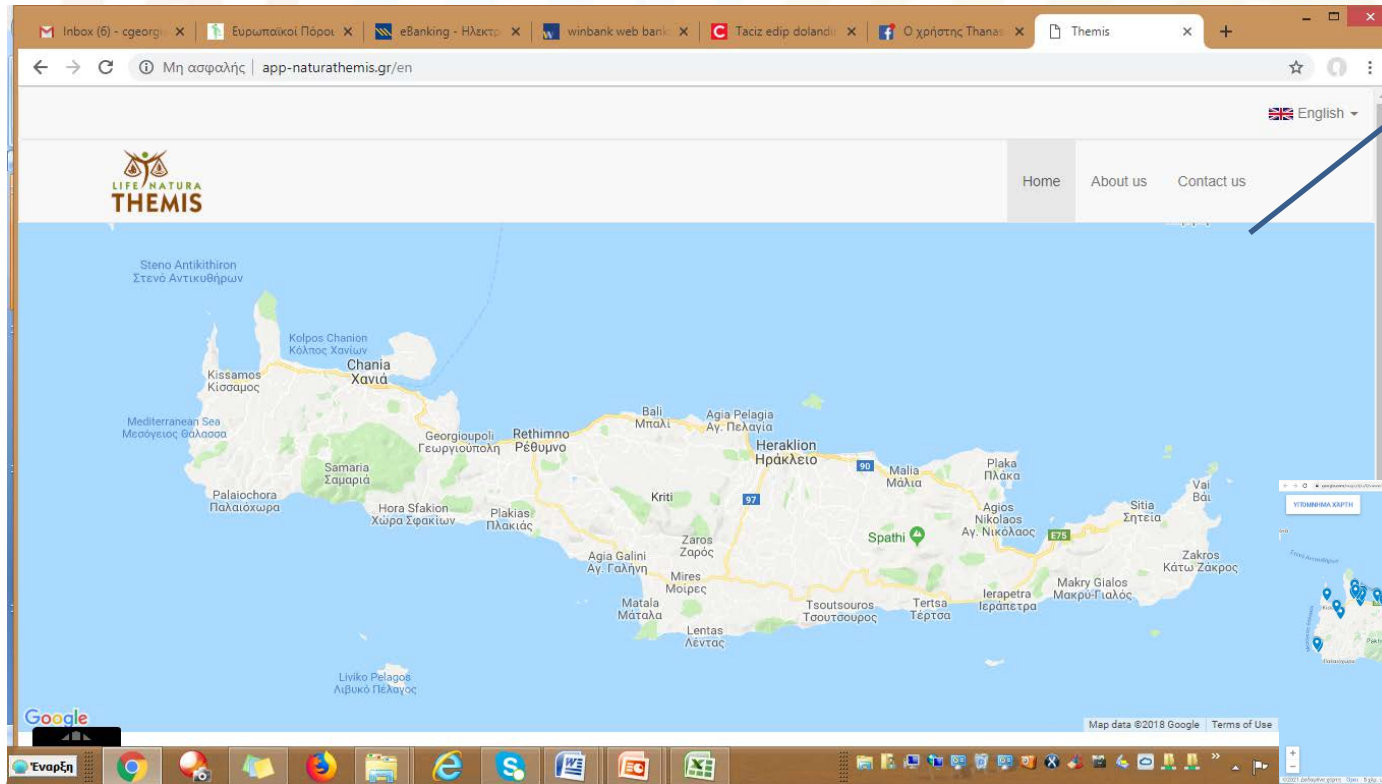
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Back office support and administration (1/2):

The Application is **supported with a server**, where each complaint is registered automatically in a database (free software MySQL).

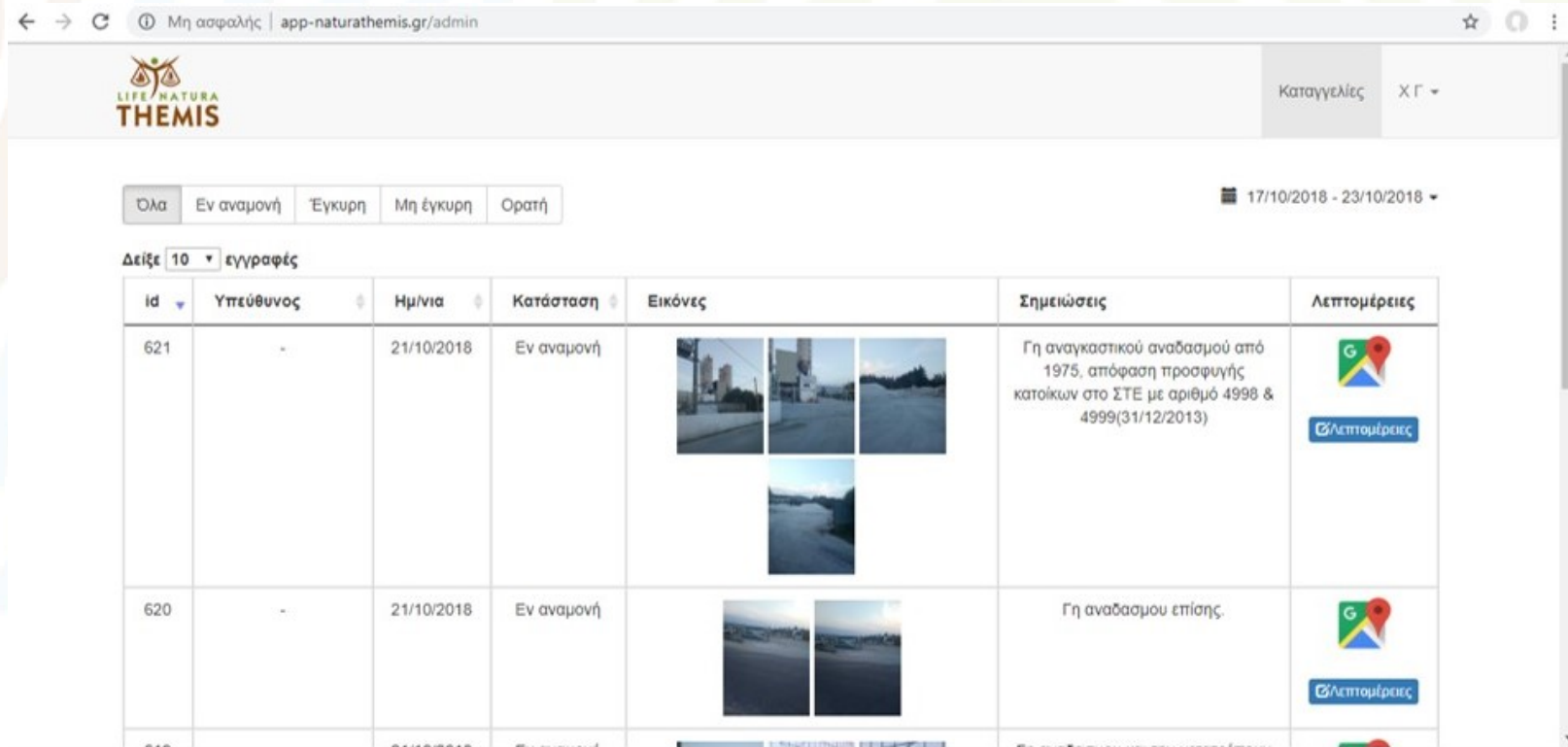






The geolocation of reports is now hidden, due to GDPR restrictions

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Back office support and administration (2/2):

It has support on a separate website (programming language PHP), with a visible side and an administration panel, which is not open to public.



id	Υπεύθυνος	Ημ/νια	Κατάσταση	Εικόνες	Σημειώσεις	Λεπτομέρειες
621	-	21/10/2018	Εν αναμονή		Γη αναγκαστικού ανασταμού από 1975, απόφαση προσφυγής κατοίκων στο ΣΤΕ με αριθμό 4998 & 4999(31/12/2013)	 Λεπτομέρειες
620	-	21/10/2018	Εν αναμονή		Γη ανασταμού επίσης.	 Λεπτομέρειες

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Administrators of the Application:

- **Receive** the reports.
- **Compare the correctness of data** (e.g. exact location, clear photos, image matching with exact infringement / crime) & **decide if report is valid or not**.
- **Contact the user** in order to inform him/her about the report's process (the message is between the Application's platform server and the user's registered application-device, not in his/her telephone number or online connection like SMS or other, meaning that the user has to visit his App to see if someone responded in the report).
- **Decide** which are the **appropriate competent authorities** for each report, depending on the type of infringement/crime and the location of the event.
- **Send** a relevant letter with the complaint.
- **Receive** replies from authorities.
- **Keeps a detailed record** of events (users' reports and authorities' replies).
- **Processes** the data and disseminate the results.



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Advantages and use of the Application by the State/Authorities:

- **The operation of the application** was carried out on a pilot basis only for the needs of the project, for a specific period of time and for a specific area.
- With the **appropriate adjustment**, it can be used in any region or country with low cost.
- With this tool, authorities can have any **report of environmental crime in real time**, with all the necessary data they need, e.g. photos with the violation, exact position and geolocation of the incident, etc.
- That means that they can **act immediately**, saving time, man-power and resources.
- With the **immediate activation of the authorities**, the chances of **locating the perpetrator** increase dramatically.
- The **effectiveness of the prosecution** can be improved.
- **Potential offenders will be more reluctant** to commit an offense, if they know that someone can record them and trigger prosecution immediately.
- State and authorities can **improve their planning** of environmental control.



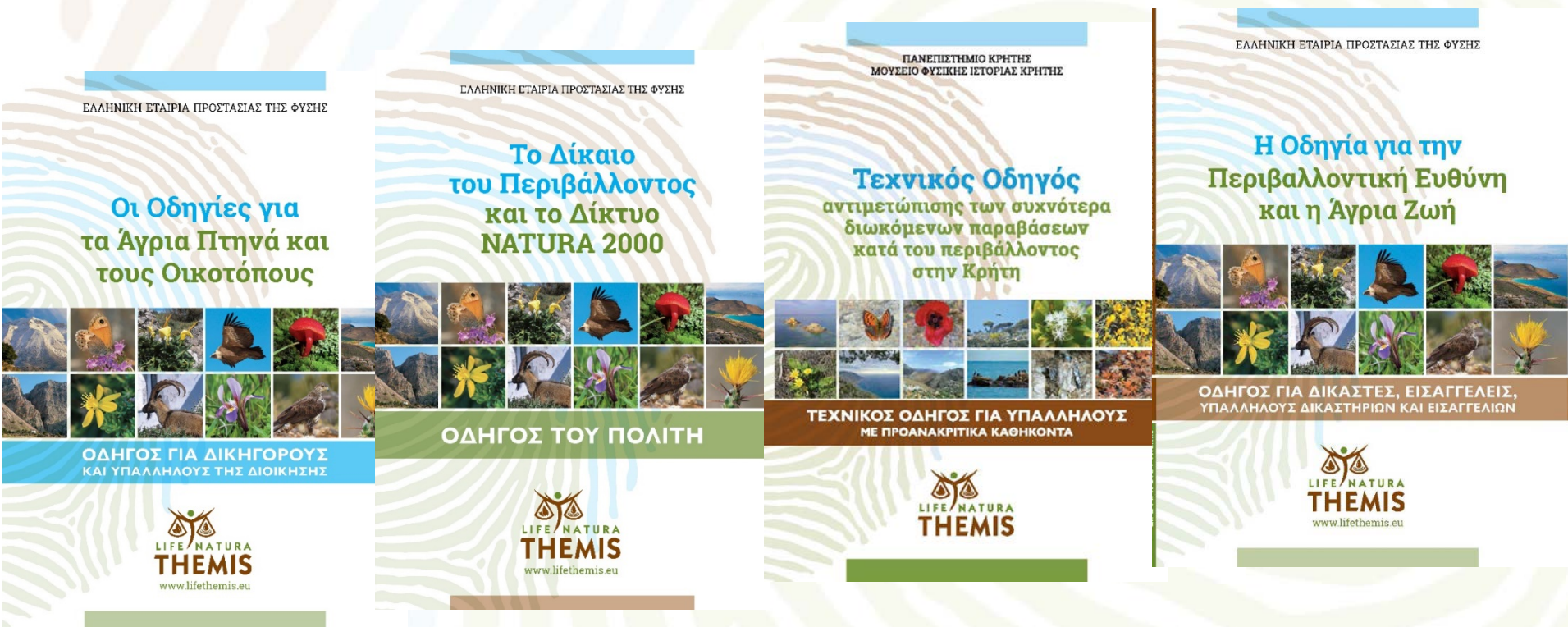
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Awareness Campaign for Environmental Crime and Environmental Liability

- **Website** (www.lifethemis.eu)
- **Social media** (@lifethemis Facebook page)
- **Electronic Newsletter** (14 **e-Newsletters**)
- **TV & Radio spots**
- **Printed** information material
- **4 Technical Guides** for: **a)** Judges / Prosecutors; **b)** Lawyers; **c)** Lay public; and **d)** Investigating Agents.
- **16 Awareness Events** all over Crete
- **6 Educational Events** for investigating employees
- **9 Training Seminars** for Judges, Lawyers, personnel of Municipalities and Region of Crete, and Environmental NGOs
- **2 National Conferences** and **1 International Conference**
- Participation in **events** all over Crete
- **3 studies** of project's effectiveness



4 Technical Guides for the public, the Administration & Lawyers, for Prosecutors / Judges & for Investigating Agents



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Thank you for your attention

Dr. Michalis Probonas, UoC – NHMC

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