

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

LIFE Natura Themis

LIFE14 GIE/GR/000026

WILDLIFE CRIME WORKSHOP

March 2, 2021

Virtual Workshop

“Applying Pilot Toolkits

**in Observing Environmental Crime and
Environmental Law's Implementation”**

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Coordinator of LIFE Natura Themis project



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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 2 Bar Associations of Crete (CB & HB, respectively).



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- ✓ **Environmental Law Observatory (ELO) in East Crete** started in September 2016 and it is 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 is in full operation since **November 2016**. It is being operated by the **Chania Bar Association (CB)**.
- Every 4 months, the team of both ELOs **checks and registers 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 take place.
- **Contacts** with stakeholders, targeted audiences and local community are made on a permanent basis.



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The database with registered environmental cases that both ELOs collect is connected with the official website of the project, in where they are presented in a geo-information map.

The geo-information map shows the prosecuting cases for wildlife crimes that are taking place within the NATURA 2000 protected areas of Crete.

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



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Download as: Percentage of finished records 90%

Map data ©2021 Terms of Use Report a map error

FILTER THE DATA
Choose a combination of criteria and press 'Apply' to filter the data.

► County ► Type ► Complaint status ► Year Εφαρμογή

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Κατέβασμα ως:

Ποσοστό καταγεγραμμένων περιστατικών **33 %**

Φιλτράρετε τα δεδομένα

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

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

Επίλογή όλων

Χανιά

Ηράκλειο

Λασιθί

Ρέθυμνο



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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 assist in the:

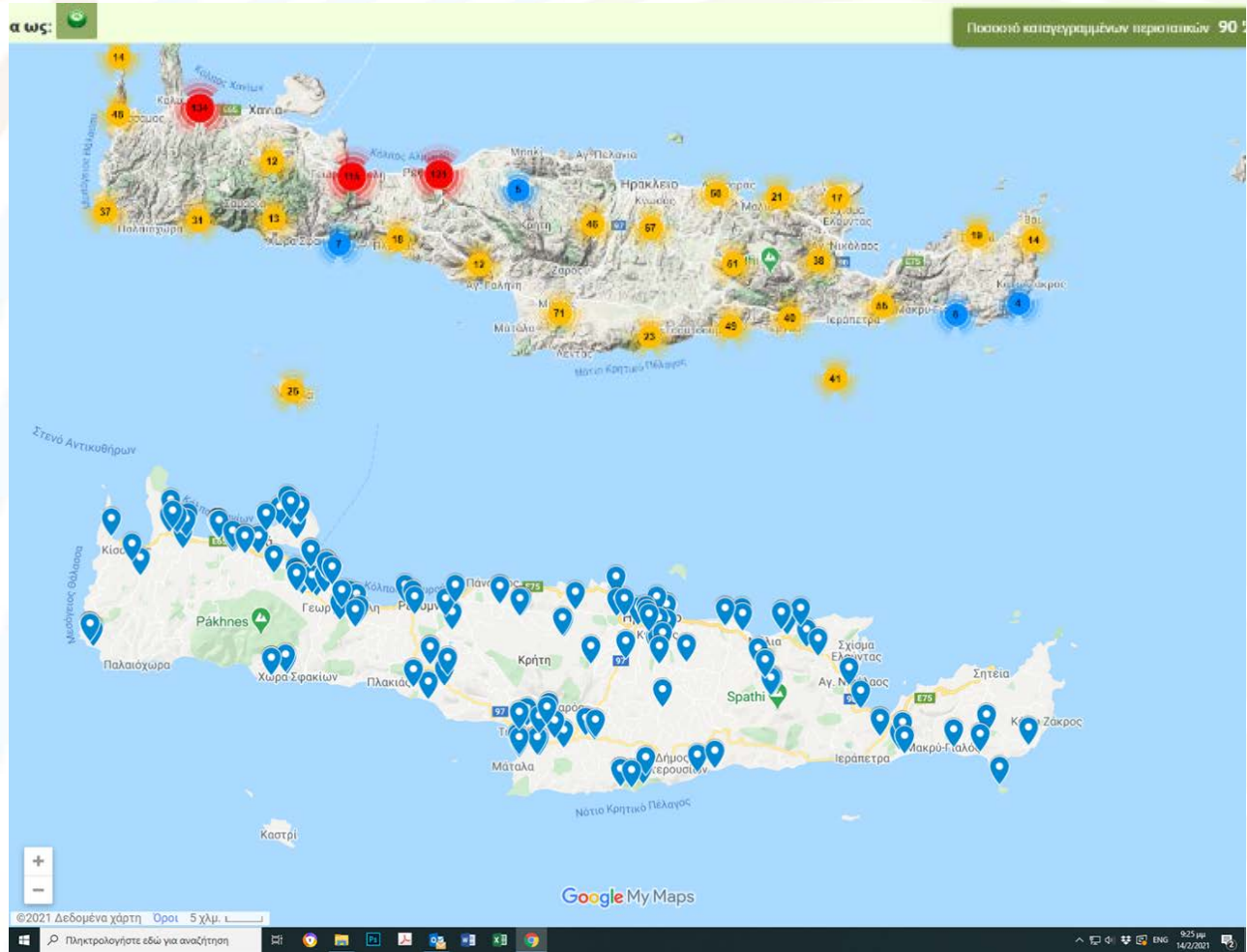
- ✓ **better planning** of environmental auditing;
 - ✓ **qualitative and quantitative assessment** of green crime;
 - ✓ **prediction** of green crime’s commission;
 - ✓ **interdepartmental cooperation** in law enforcement; and
 - ✓ **sensitization** of local communities and **effective** case prosecution.
- ✓ Especially if 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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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 reporting 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 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) (2/5)

- ✓ Fully functional since **August 2017**; freely available and covers only Crete, Greece.
- ✓ **552** Users have downloaded the App.; **207** of them are **active** (147 Android / 60 iOS)
- ✓ More than **250** reports have been received so far.
- ✓ **176** 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
Εξαγωγή
Αγορά άυρακάρτας
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.
Εγκαταστήθηκε

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 να αναδειχθεί σημασία κατά την υιοθέτηση του περιβαλλοντικού δικαίου. Το έργο επιδιώκει, συγκεκριμένα να τεκμηριώσει ότι η ερήνη εφαρμογή του Περιβαλλοντικού Δικαιού προάγει την ορθή χρήση των οικονομικών πόρων, την ταπεινή ανάπτυξη και

ΔΙΑΒΑΣΤΕ ΠΕΡΙΣΣΟΤΕΡΑ

ΚΡΙΤΙΚΕΣ 10 κριτικές κριτικών και 74 προτάσεις

4,8
★★★★☆
5 αστέρια 1

Stella Pel
★★★★★ 16 Δεκεμβρίου 2018
"ανέκδοτο, αλλά στη χεστή και... Τοσο μη τοσο χρονομο, συζητητέμο"

Vasi Iki
★★★★★ 4 Μαρτίου 2020
"ως μη μόνο να απεθάνο στα τογραφικά του κήθ έρω, γραφή"

Τίτος Βαβούρης
★★★★★ 25 Φεβρουαρίου 2019
"τοσο Μ.Μ.Ε. του Νόμο, του ΔΚ"

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



QR for Android



QR for iOS



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Technical characteristics:

- ✓ Available in **Greek** and in **English**.
- ✓ Compatible with **Android** and **iOS** devices.
- ✓ **QR Code** availability.
- ✓ Required memory space for installation: 4.2 MB.
- ✓ Friendly user's **interface**.
- ✓ Availability for **offline report** if internet connection is not available.



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Complaint steps:

- ✓ Initially, the **georeference system** of the user's device needs to be activated.
- ✓ Following the instructions, **the user takes photos** of the problem he/she wishes to report (up to 4 photos).
- ✓ The user can **write a relevant comment or text** with possible keywords that briefly describe the violation (e.g. debris disposal, seafront degradation, etc.).
- ✓ The user **sends his message automatically**.
- ✓ When there is **no internet access**, the application saves the complaint on the device and the **sending is completed automatically** when there is an internet connection.
- ✓ The georeference of the violation's point is done automatically by the positioning system of the user's device.



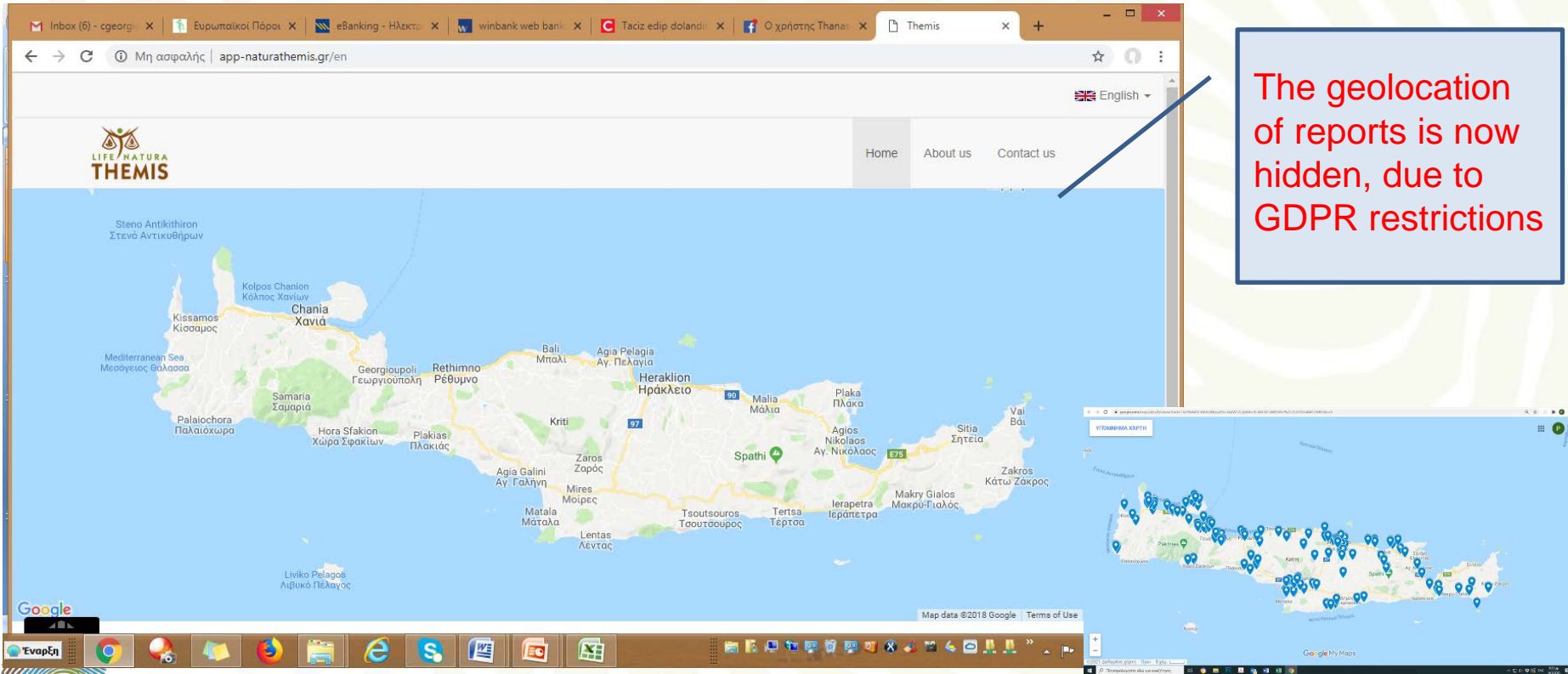
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Back office support and administration (1/2):

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



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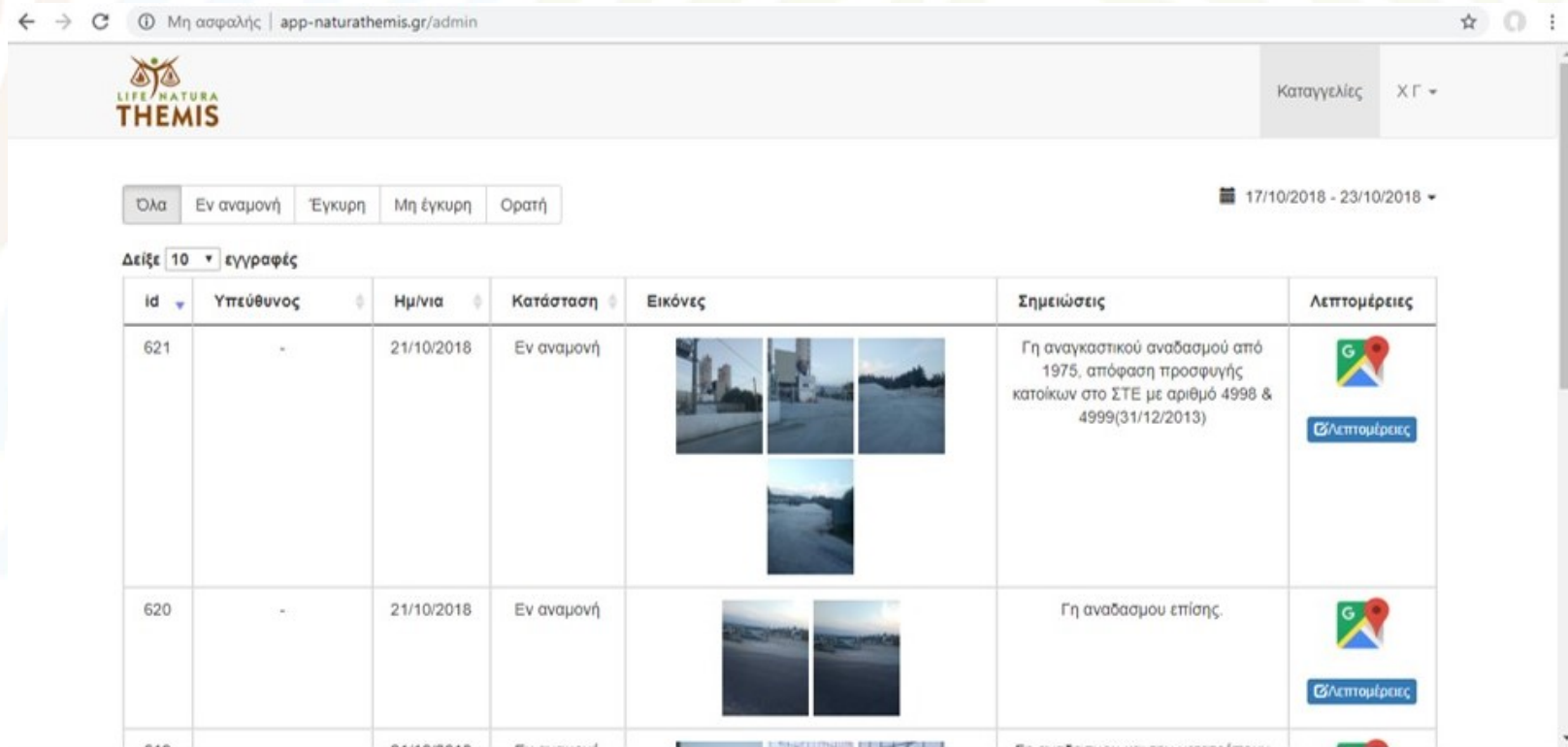


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Back office support and administration (2/2):

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



The screenshot shows the administration interface of the LIFE Natura Themis website. The browser address bar displays 'Μη ασφαλής | app-naturathemis.gr/admin'. The page features the LIFE Natura Themis logo and a navigation menu with 'Καταγγελίες' and 'X Γ'. Below the logo, there are filters for 'Όλα', 'Εν αναμονή', 'Έγκυρη', 'Μη έγκυρη', and 'Ορατή', along with a date range '17/10/2018 - 23/10/2018'. A dropdown menu shows 'Δείξε 10 εγγραφές'. The main content is a table with the following columns: 'id', 'Υπεύθυνος', 'Ημ/νια', 'Κατάσταση', 'Εικόνες', 'Σημειώσεις', and 'Λεπτομέρειες'. Two rows are visible, both with 'Εν αναμονή' status and dates of '21/10/2018'. The first row (id 621) includes a detailed note about a forced displacement in 1975 and a map icon. The second row (id 620) has a shorter note and also includes a map icon.

| 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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Thank you for your attention

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