

GREEK PREPARATION

ACTIVITY



Kifisos river, the vein of ancient Athens that got destroyed by human activities.

Kifisos river is the longest river in Attica and since the ancient time was the blessing of the area. Its bed stretches over an area of 12,000 hectares, originating in Mount Parnitha and passing through at least ten areas of Attica before flowing into the Faliro Bay of the Saronic Gulf.

Mentions of Kifisos river can be found from over 2000 years ago from Greek authors. Historically, the Kifissos River played a crucial role in sustaining the agricultural communities of ancient Athens. Its waters were used for irrigation, helping to cultivate the fertile plains of the surrounding Attica region. In classical Athens, the river was celebrated as a natural

boundary and a source of livelihood. The river also provided water for olive groves, a cornerstone of Athenian economy and culture. The sacred olive trees, thought to be gifts from the goddess Athena, were closely tied to the prosperity of the city, and the Kifissos helped sustain them.

Kifissos in Modern Athens has suffered from urbanization and industrialization. Much of it has been channelized or covered to accommodate the expansion of Athens, leading to environmental degradation and pollution. What was once a life-giving force has, in many areas, become an underappreciated or neglected feature of the cityscape. Efforts have been made in recent years to raise awareness of the river's ecological and historical importance. Environmental groups and local initiatives advocate for the restoration of parts of the river and the preservation of its remaining natural segments.

Kifisos before urbanisation



Kifisos nowadays



Green innovating Ideas in our area for protecting the environment in Circular Economy

- Local bakeries, stores and restaurants participate in an innovative idea to reduce food waste. They are offering affordable, high quality surprise food packages, at steep discounts—up to 70% off the original price. These packages are surplus foods that would otherwise go to waste.
- Another innovative recycling initiative encourages citizens to actively engage in sustainable waste management by offering rewards for recycling. The system allows individuals to deposit recyclable materials, such as plastics, aluminum, and glass, into designated

collection bins. Each time materials are recycled, participants earn points, which are tracked through a digital platform. These points can later be exchanged for various rewards, including discounts, free products, or services from local businesses. Operating similarly with the same goal, other recycling bins offer immediate rewards after the recycling process, which participants can either keep for themselves or donate to charity. The initiative aims to reduce waste, promote the circular economy and increase environmental awareness within communities.

Circular economy and Europe

Europe serves as a global leader in adopting circular economy principles and transitioning to a more sustainable future.

One of the many ways is by providing financial support to innovative/green projects that promote circular economy. Such projects can be technology oriented, like the generation of AI programs for circular economy solutions.

Europe also has some of strictest rules to achieve low pollution manufacturing.

- Manufactures are required to implement emission control technologies to regulate chemicals and reduce air pollution.
- Manufacturers must ensure responsible sourcing of wood and paper products.



Environmental problems of each partner country

Poland, Portugal, Cyprus, and Lithuania are also facing serious environmental challenges.

Poland depends heavily on coal for energy, causing high air pollution, with cities like Kraków and Warsaw often experiencing smog from factory emissions, car exhaust and household heating. This results in some of the worst air quality in the European Union, leading to serious health problems for the citizens.

Portugal is dealing with rising temperatures and more frequent heatwaves due to climate change. Droughts are becoming more common while coastal areas face erosion and damage from rising sea levels and stronger storms.

Cyprus struggles with limited freshwater resources, worsened by long droughts and excessive groundwater use, leading to aquifer depletion and saltwater intrusion, particularly along the coast. Climate change, with reduced rainfall and higher temperatures, is making water shortages even more severe.

In Lithuania, forests are being cleared for agriculture and urban development, threatening wildlife and nature. Roads and infrastructure disrupt animal habitats and migration routes, causing biodiversity loss and endangering species, some of which are unique to the country.

Human activity and pollution – Rubbish everywhere

what can we do?

Human activities harm the environment in many ways. For example, the use of car fuels pollutes the air, and the over-exploitation of natural resources damages ecosystems. One of the biggest problems is the careless use of plastics, especially single-use ones, which often end up in the oceans, threatening marine life.

Additionally, people often show little concern for the cleanliness of the environment, as we frequently see litter on streets and in forests. What we can do is clean up the existing waste and use new technologies to break down plastics.

Every municipality should ensure the presence of trash bins so that litter is not thrown on the ground, and definitely enhance recycling by adding bins for plastics, fabrics, glass, etc., perhaps offering rewards to citizens who participate. Municipalities can also organize groups to give talks in schools in order to develop ecological awareness in children from an early age.