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# STUDY CASES ON CONSERVATION OF ENDANGERED PLANTS AND HABITATS IN GREECE

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The Greek flora is among the richest in Europe and the Mediterranean Basin; it comprises a total of about 6500 taxa (with a high level of endemism, ca 17%), distributed over 13 discreet floristic regions and numerous (ca 115) diverse habitat types. A recent overview of the conservation status of Greek endemics indicates that at least 40% of them are threatened or near threatened while, similarly, many habitat types are challenged by considerable anthropogenic and climatic risks. On the other hand, during the past decade, a significant number of projects have increasingly addressed several conservation issues (ecological research, field inventorying, monitoring, management and environmental awareness), mainly through the implementation of the European Habitat and Species Directive (92/43/EEC) and the Global (and European) Conservation Strategy initiatives. Case studies will be presented referring to:

(a) the LIFE+ Project 'JUNICOAST - Actions for the conservation of coastal dunes with *Juniperus* spp. in Crete and the South Aegean (Greece)' that is currently implementing conservation actions on the priority habitat '2250\* - Coastal dunes with *Juniperus* spp.' in several locations of southern Crete. Particular emphasis is placed on determining the *Juniperus macrocarpa* population size, composition and structure (sex ratio, reproduction and regeneration, growth, age distribution).

(b) the LIFE Project 'CRETAPLANT - A Pilot Network of Plant Micro-Reserves in Western Crete' which led to the establishment of 7 high-biodiversity, small-scale nature reserves, each characterized by 6 plant species of European Community priority: *Androcymbium rechingeri*, *Anthemis glaberrima*, *Bupleurum kakiskalae*, *Cephalanthera cucullata*, *Hypericum aciferum*, *Nepeta sphaciotica* and priority habitat type 9370, \*Palm groves of *Phoenix*.

(c) the European Projects ENSCONET and SEMCLIMED and relevant activities of two important, recently established, Greek Seed Banks on the *ex situ* conservation of numerous, threatened plants.

**Keywords:** endemic plants, threatened plants and habitats, in situ conservation, monitoring, seed banking