

The Environmental Implementation Review



Greece

Environmental Implementation Review 2025

Greece has the longest coastline in Europe. Two thirds of its territory is hilly or mountainous with steep slopes. It is a 'hot spot' for biodiversity, with more than 6,200 endemic species.

Greece needs to preserve its natural environment and develop its environmental infrastructure, for environmental as well as economic reasons, given the importance of tourism.

Implementation deficits of environmental rules remain a serious issue as shown by the high number of infringements cases and fines, especially on waste and urban wastewater treatment.

Highlights



Greece has invested significant efforts in awareness raising and trainings and has also shown an excellent record under the Bathing Water Directive, with 95.8% of Greek bathing waters rated excellent quality.

Main Challenges



Circular economy

Urgent action and investment is needed in waste management and the circular economy to move away from Greece's reliance on waste disposal in landfills (including illegal ones), which remains significant. The number of illegal landfills in operation or in need of rehabilitation has continued to decrease over the years, but the remaining illegal landfills will be difficult to close unless new facilities are built. An overcapacity of treatment facilities of residual waste will not help Greece's transition towards a circular economy.



Pollution

There has been positive progress in urban wastewater treatment, such as the systematic assessment and strategic re-organisation of the country's investment needs. However, there are significant delays in the projects that need to be carried out.



Nature and biodiversity

Greece's Natura 2000 network is now considered to be complete. Nevertheless specific conservation measures and management plans are lacking and the percentage of habitats in good condition has decreased over the years.

Governance and investment



The investment gap stands at €2.3 billion per year in Greece, representing around 1.13% of national GDP – higher than the EU-average (0.77%).

The continuous non-compliance with the rulings of the CJEU is an indication of systemic weaknesses in Greece's environmental administrative system and its capacity.

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