

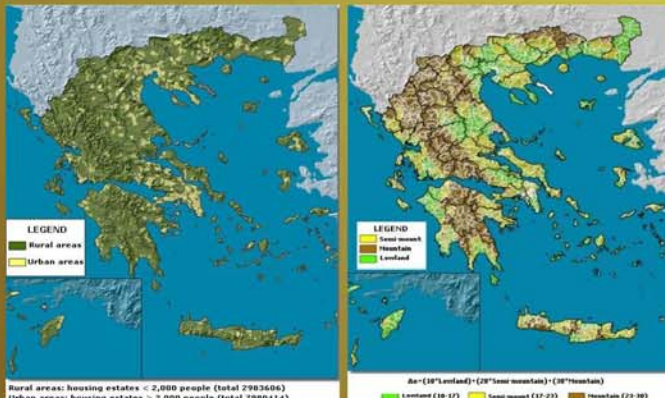
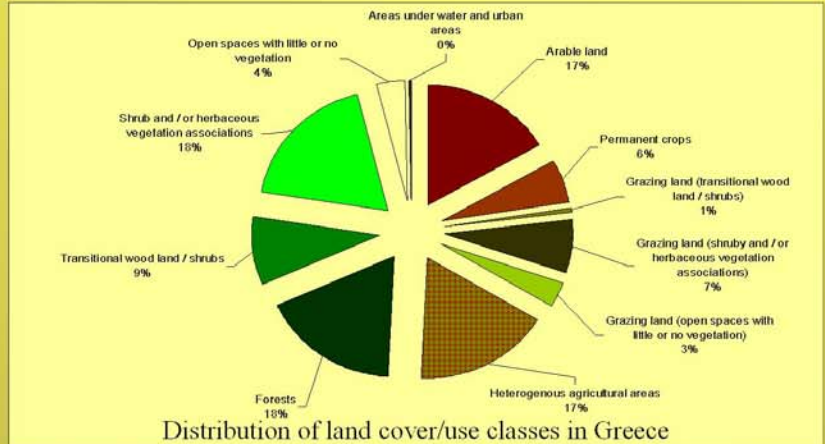
HIGH NATURE VALUE FARMING IN GREECE.

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General Information for Greece

Greece, situated in the North-east part of Mediterranean, consists of a mountainous peninsular mainland and thousands of islands. About 80% of the country has the characteristics of Less Favoured Areas (mountainous and handicapped land areas) distributed as presented in the map of country relief.

The country extends over 13.2 million ha and is inhabited by more than 11.2 million people, which are unevenly distributed by 73% to urban areas at mean densities of 392 heads/km², while rural areas average 27 heads/km² (see map of urban distribution).

Climate is predominantly Mediterranean with subtypes: Dry, Alpine and Continental, but many micro-climates and local variations exist.

Land Use broadly divides into Agricultural land (49.3%), Forest and semi-natural land (47.3%), Water bodies and Artificial areas (3.4%).

The Agricultural sector in Greece

Agricultural land consists of 32.5% arable land, 11.5% permanent crops, 33.8% heterogeneous agricultural areas and 22.2% grazing lands.

Agricultural sector employs 13.4% of country's workforce and more than 800,000 holdings are registered with an average acreage of 4.4 ha. Half of them are of size less than 2 ha, while they cultivate on average 6 to 7 land plots each, thus the majority of them provide secondary income.

Agricultural sector contributes about 5% to the Greek GDP, with a declining trend and a superiority of plant production (70% of total).

Agriculture and biodiversity

Greece is characterised by a high degree of biodiversity, where 85 ecotypes, 182 fauna and 58 flora species have already been recognised as SCI. The total number of Greek taxa of flowering plants exceeds 6,300 while endemic ones are 1/4 of them and the same applies to fauna species which are estimated to over 5,000. Endemism is a very important feature of biodiversity in Greece and these species are often restricted to small areas. Agriculture is closely associated to biodiversity in general and specifically more than 300 plant varieties and 43 local breeds of farm animals have been included in the national lists.

For the purpose of biodiversity conservation Greece designated some 262 sites as Natura 2000 areas covering 18.2% of the total land area. In addition a body of national legislation exists to protect wild species, ecotypes and the traditional agricultural germplasm.

With the aim to assess High Natural Value farming areas various databases were used (CORINE, Land Use, Important species etc) as well as expert knowledge. As a result High Natural Value arable land has been estimated to 2,424,000 ha and the respective grazing land to 2,045,000 ha, while 2,351,650 ha of forestry land fall to the same category and distribute evenly over the country (see the map).

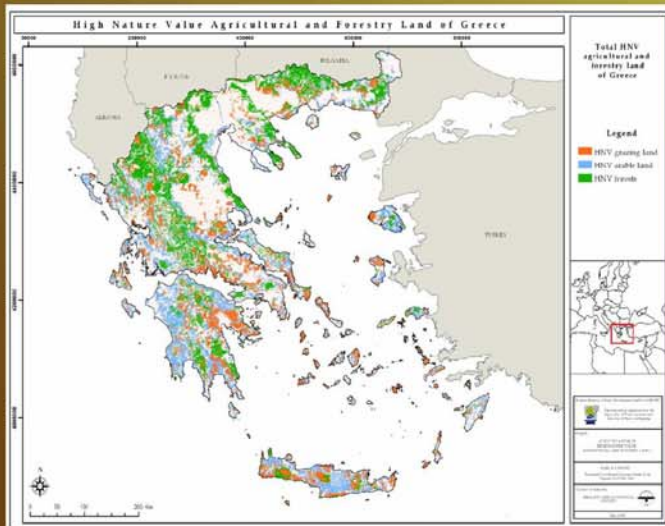


Table. Species richness of faunal taxa in Greece.

	SPECIES	SUBSPECIES	ENDEMIC sp	ENDEMIC ssp
Mammals	116	~50	4	35
Birds	422	~90	0	4
Reptiles	59		6	71
Amphibians	20		2	3
Fish	557	21	35	16
Echinodermata	107			
Mollusca	333	0	187	0
Insects	1716	30	1205	21