

Resolution adopted as amended

AUSTERITY PROGRAMMES AND THE EXAMPLE OF LEASING OF UNDEVELOPED GREEK ISLANDS

Background

Austerity measures imposed (or “proposed”) by the troika of the European Commission, the IMF and the ECB, on debtor countries such as Greece, Portugal and Ireland, and increasingly extending to others such as Spain, Italy and Cyprus, are producing a debilitating effect on the citizens of those countries who are being driven into poverty and social deprivation.

We are now witnessing further, less obvious results of the intolerable pressures being applied by the troika, with unforeseeable long-term consequences.

For example, the national Greek Asset Development Fund plans to grant 50 year leases on 40 uninhabited islands to private developers or corporations, and the Israeli government is reported to have discussed leasing one such island for the creation of a military training base. In Spain, the government has slashed the budget of its environment ministry by 70%, has passed a law on sea borders reducing the amount of areas enjoying environmental protection and has eliminated all subsidies to renewable energy.

The European Green Party Council in Athens,

- Recalls that structural adjustments of the type being imposed by the troika almost always have destructive consequences as the price for short-term financial gains.
- Declares our great concern and profound opposition against the plans of the Greek State regarding the long-term lease of uninhabited island to prospective investors.
- Draws the attention of the Greek State to the fact that the recently released list of forty (40) island includes twenty-four (24) NATURA 2000 sites hosting flora and fauna species of European importance.
- Declares that this particular case of disposal of invaluable natural habitat reflects a complete lack of environmental consideration and planning on behalf of the Greek State.
- Encourages the Greek authorities, however, to work with the European Commission and EU Member States on reforms in various fields, including tax collection, land registry, financial auditing, anti-corruption, protection of refugees and administrative capacity building, as well as on maximal absorption of EU funds with a stricter focus on sustainable investments and jobs.
- Affirms that we will actively support citizens and NGOs in their struggle for the safeguarding and conservation of these natural sanctuaries all over Europe, regardless of any kind of bailout programme.
- Emphasizes that, contrary to other natural ecosystems where human beings' presence may be compatible, uninhabited islands of importance for protection of biodiversity owe their value for rare and protected species chiefly to the absence of human beings and therefore, no human intervention, of any extent, is affordable.