

**Possible Endangerment of the Cyprus Grass Snake (Natrix natrix cypriaca) during clean up at Paralimni by Cyprus Government**

**Report by Hans-Jorg Wiedl, aka Snake George, on Paralimni Lakes, Cyprus**

**October – November 2010**

Background

In 1995 I contacted The Ministry of Agriculture and told them about the big problem about pollution, the hunters and motocross at Paralimni Lakes. I found many dead grass snakes shot and killed in different ways and a terrible situation with the rubbish around the lake.

Since 1995 the three successive Ministers of Agriculture promised that they will start from now on to do everything to save the grass snake. But they did nothing so the situation became worse from one year to another. There was never anything done from the Government to save the grass snake.

October/November 2010

I visited Paralimni during the recent period of civil engineering works. This action was published in Phileleftheros on 15 November 2010 (as attached in the Greek language only).

It was from the beginning the biggest mistake not to collect grass snakes from this area before the civil engineering works were carried out.

I believe that because of this extensive civil engineering work The Government has killed the last grass snakes in the area.

I am quite sure if they had informed me what they are planning to do there was a chance I could save at least some of the grass snakes.

From the petrol EKO station they put oil in the channel and everyone knows what that means.

The hunters had their festival on the lake as we found so many dead birds and all the promises that the Government would stop to give permission for hunting at that area was not true.

It would be impossible for the grass snake to survive.

I would like that someone from the EU from Brussels to come and see the Paralimni lake or Xyliatou dam or even the other streams in the Troodos where the grass snake used to live and now is gone.

We can just pray and hope that there is somewhere a small population of grass snakes which might survive.

Here is a pictorial record what I found.

3 pictures of oil emptied into the channel from the petrol station at Paralimni Lake







Rubbish around the Lake





Rubbish around the lake. Paralimni in the distance.



Rubbish 50 metres away from channel





Rubbish near channel. Water around this area in Winter only.



Cleaned area but put rubbish in bushes instead of disposing of. Near Sotira Village.





Cleaned area but put rubbish in bushes. Paralimni in the distance.



Put rubbish in this area then burnt it. Sotira side.





Evidence of Hunting



extensive civil engineering which may have exterminated the Cyprus Grass Snake

