

PRESS RELEASE

Environmental Civil Society Organizations Boycott Ministry of Environment Consultation Processes Until the Repeal of Amendments to the Protected Areas Law

Tiranë, 12 June 2026

Environmental Civil Society Organizations express their clear position that they cannot participate in consultation processes organized by the Ministry of Environment as long as Law No. 21/2024 amending the Protected Areas Law remains in force. This law has opened the way for developments and interventions in areas that should have the highest level of environmental protection in the country.

In this context, environmental organizations have decided to boycott the public consultation meeting convened by the Ministry on 12 June regarding a number of draft legal acts, refusing to become part of a process that seeks to portray an institutional normality that does not exist. While discussions continue on the further alignment of Albanian legislation with the European Union acquis, large-scale infrastructure and tourism projects are advancing within the national network of protected areas, seriously undermining the integrity of these ecosystems and raising significant concerns about the genuine commitment of public institutions to European nature protection standards.

This position is further supported by the responses and joint statements issued by environmental organizations^{1 2 3}, which have consistently opposed interventions in protected areas and legal amendments that undermine their integrity.

Civil Society Organizations consider the repeal of the amendments introduced through Law No. 21/2024 as well as the cancellation/disallowance the touristic resort project within the protected area "Pishe Poro - Narta", to be a non-negotiable prerequisite for any further institutional dialogue on environmental matters and Albania's European integration process. This demand is not merely a concern raised by environmental organizations; it has also been clearly reflected in the European Commission's closing benchmarks for Chapter 27 of the accession negotiations, which require the effective protection of protected areas and full alignment with European biodiversity conservation standards.

For this reason, Civil Society Organizations do not consider participation in technical consultations on new legal and sub-legal acts to be relevant as long as the fundamental issue of protected area protection remains unresolved. Efforts to demonstrate progress in the accession process cannot be considered credible while the most serious environmental concern identified in the sector remains unaddressed.

This position takes on particular significance at a time when citizens, activists, and local communities across Albania have been protesting for 12 consecutive days against the degradation of protected areas and in defense of the country's natural heritage.

¹ [Joint Press Statement of Environmental NGOs](#)

² [Joint Statement of the GreenAL Network on Interventions in the Pishë Poro-Nartë Protected Area](#)

³ [Request for review of Albanian government policies on Protected Areas](#)

Environmental Civil Society Organizations declare that this boycott is not an isolated symbolic action, but a principled position that will remain unchanged with regard to any future consultation processes convened by the responsible institutions until this fundamental issue is addressed. There can be no meaningful consultation, genuine dialogue, or credible progress in the European integration process as long as the demand for the repeal of Law No. 21/2024 remains unmet.

The protection of protected areas is not a procedural matter. It is a test of the Albanian state's willingness to uphold the Constitution, safeguard the public interest, and fulfill its obligations towards the European Union.

List of civil society organizations supporting the boycott of public hearings

(In alphabetical order)

AlbNatyra Association

CELIM Shqipëri

CoPlan, Instituti për Zhvillimin e Habitatit

EcoAlbania

GARD - Grupi i Aktivisteve Rurale te Dibres

LUMI

Përtej të Sotmes

Pseda-ILIRIA

Qendra Burimore e Mjedisit në Shqipëri (REC Albania)

Qendra Mjedisore për Zhvillim Edukim dhe Rrjetëzim (EDEN)

Qendra për Ruajtjen dhe Mbrojtjen e Mjedisit Natyror në Shqipëri (PPNEA)

Qendra per Transparencë dhe Informim të Lirë

Rrjeti per Raportimin e K.O.K.Sh

SEEP

Shtëpia e Gjelbër

Shoqata "Qendra Sociale në Ndhimë të Njerëzve në Nevojë" Fushë-Arrëz

Shoqata Ornitologjike e Shqipërisë (AOS)

VIS Albania