

Press Release on the Climate Change Conference

In the presence of the Minister for Climate Crisis and Civil Protection, Mr. Kefalogiannis, the Deputy Regional Governor and representative of the Regional Governor of Attica, Ms. Moraitaki, the Mayors of Dionysos and Rafina–Pikermi, Ms. Maichosoglou and Ms. Tseva respectively, the President of the Major Opposition of the Municipality of Pallini, Mr. Smeros, representatives of local government, Academician Mr. Zerefos, the Vice Rector of the University of West Attica, Ms. Papageorgiou, the Professor of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Ms. Dousi, the representative of the President of the Institute of Educational Policy, Mr. Christodoulou, as well as education officials, teachers and students, the Climate Change Conference titled “Students in Action for the Climate” was held on Saturday, March 7, 2026. The event was organized by the Directorate of Secondary Education of Eastern Attica in collaboration with the Goulandris Natural History Museum, at the Museum’s Amphitheatre.

Following the opening of the Conference by the Director of Secondary Education, Mr. Marinos, and the welcome address by the President of the Goulandris Natural History Museum, Ms. Vogiatzaki, all official guests delivered greetings.

In his address, the Minister for Climate Crisis and Civil Protection congratulated the organizers for the initiative of holding a Conference on Climate Change. He emphasized that major changes often begin “from the bottom up,” by people who think and act differently. The Conference is not merely a school activity, but a meaningful exercise in students’ participation in understanding the environment and their role within it. The younger generation is called upon to develop a more conscious and responsible relationship with the environment, while the responsibility of the state is to support this effort by moving forward with necessary changes and promoting solutions that respect the natural environment.

In his keynote speech titled “Climate Change: Past, Present and Future,” Academician Mr. Christos Zerefos presented scientific data demonstrating the rapid acceleration of climate change. He referred to measurements from ice cores that record the increase in carbon dioxide since the industrial era, leading to today’s global warming. He stressed that the Mediterranean is among the regions warming the fastest, with rising air and sea temperatures, intensifying extreme phenomena such as heavy rainfall and wildfires. Presenting climate model projections, he underlined that without substantial measures, temperatures could rise significantly in the coming decades, while highlighting the importance of implementing the Paris Agreement on Climate and transitioning to renewable energy sources to mitigate the climate crisis.

The Conference highlighted the connection between science, society and education, giving voice to students and strengthening their role as active citizens for a sustainable future. The 21 student presentations—by 240 students from 18 schools of the Directorate of Secondary Education of Eastern Attica—were based on months of research and activities addressing climate change and extreme weather phenomena in their local area, sustainable and Mediterranean diet, microplastics and the journey of plastics in the sea, water as a valuable natural resource, carbon footprint, ancient monuments and climate change, as well as the psychological impact of the climate crisis. Student activities were not limited to presentations, but also included theatrical,

musical and dance performances, as well as artistic creations such as drawings, models and posters.

Warm thanks are extended to Ms. Vogiatzaki, President of the Goulandris Natural History Museum, for providing the venue, the warm hospitality and the guided tour of the Climate Change Exhibition and the Biodiversity Exhibition; to Ms. Papavlasopoulou, Head of the Educational Department of the GAIA Center; to Mr. Zabelis, Head of Events; and to Mr. Skentzos, Head of Audiovisual Equipment and IT, for their excellent cooperation. Thanks are also due to the Education Advisors of the Directorate of Secondary Education of Eastern Attica, who chaired the sessions: Ms. Vrysouli, Advisor for Civil and Architectural Engineers; Ms. Gioti, Advisor for Natural Sciences; Mr. Giotis, Advisor for English Language; Ms. Douka, Advisor for Philology; Mr. Kateris, Advisor for Natural Sciences; Ms. Koliopoulou, Advisor for Electronics; and Ms. Koutsiviti, Advisor for Philology.

We also thank Ms. Pertsinidou, Coordinator of School Programs and Networks of the Directorate of Secondary Education of Eastern Attica, for the organization, and Ms. Karkavitsa, Ms. Karkaletsis, Ms. Lykoudi, Ms. Minitiou and Ms. Sfyraiki for administrative support.

Finally, we extend our sincere thanks to our students and their teachers who inspire and guide them, to all the educators who attended the Conference from across Attica, to our distinguished guests, and to our sponsors: Zagori, Sklavenitis and the Municipality of Pallini.