



Event: “Youth Climate Awareness and Leadership Programme”
Climate Walk at Kato Zakros Gorge – Sitia, Lasithi
Friday 22.11.2024

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Sitia, Lasithi: **Kato Zakros Gorge (Geosite of the UNESCO Global Geopark of Sitia)**

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW CLIMATE WALK AT KATO ZAKROS GORGE

This **Climate Walk** takes young students on a guided journey through **Kato Zakros Gorge**, an important geosite within the UNESCO Global Geopark of Sitia. Young students will explore the mountain ecosystem, learn about the critical role of water resources, and observe the effects of climate change on freshwater availability and biodiversity. The walk will also highlight the importance of protecting mountain ecosystems and conserving water resources.

KATO ZAKROS GORGE AND THE UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK OF SITIA

Kato Zakros Gorge, located in Sitia, East Crete, is a stunning natural landscape and a geosite of the **UNESCO Global Geopark of Sitia**. The gorge is known for its rich biodiversity, including native plant and animal species, year-round flowing streams, and waterfalls. It is an excellent example of how mountain ecosystems are influenced by climate change, particularly regarding water availability. As part of the UNESCO Global Geopark of Sitia, Kato Zakros Gorge is an educational site highlighting the importance of preserving natural ecosystems and understanding how climate change affects water resources and biodiversity. Geoparks like Sitia provide valuable opportunities for students to learn about the dynamic processes shaping the Earth and how these processes are influenced by climate change.

CLIMATE WALK FACILITATORS

Isidoros Kampolis, MSc Geologist – Geomorphologist, PhDc, EU Climate Pact Ambassador

Ourania Konstanti, PhD, Cell Biology and Bioinformatics, Laboratory Teaching Staff, Department of Biology, NKUA, EU

Vangelis Perakis, Scientific Director of Sitia Geopark

Alice Corovessi, Head of EU Climate Pact CC in Greece

Georgia Mouriadou, Production & Manager Engineer, EU Climate Pact CC in Greece Team Member

INTERACTIVE ELEMENTS

- **Ecosystem Exploration:** Environmental guides will lead students through Kato Zakros Gorge, pointing out native plant and animal species that inhabit the area. They will learn about the interconnection between mountain ecosystems and water resources, focusing on how climate change threatens the balance of this natural environment. Guides will explain how rising temperatures, shifting rainfall patterns, and reduced water flow affect local biodiversity and water availability. They will highlight how mountain ecosystems like Kato Zakros Gorge are crucial in freshwater conservation.
- **Discussion Prompt:** At the end of the walk, students will participate in a guided discussion centred around the prompt: **"How can we protect the freshwater resources and biodiversity of Kato Zakros Gorge in the face of climate change?"** This discussion will encourage young students to reflect on the impact of climate change on local ecosystems, particularly on water sources, plant life, and animal species. They will explore the significance of preserving mountain ecosystems like Kato Zakros Gorge and consider practical ways the local community can conserve water resources and protect biodiversity. The guides will facilitate the discussion, helping young students connect their observations during the walk to broader environmental issues such as drought, water conservation, and sustainable land use.

BENEFITS FOR YOUNG STUDENTS

- Young students will gain a deeper appreciation of the intricate relationships between mountain ecosystems and water resources, learning how changes in one part of the ecosystem affect the entire natural environment.



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- Witnessing the impact of climate change on water resources and biodiversity in Kato Zakros Gorge will help young students better understand the urgency of protecting these fragile ecosystems and addressing climate change.
- The discussion format encourages students to think critically about the challenges facing mountain ecosystems and freshwater resources, helping them connect what they observe in nature and real-world environmental solutions.
- This Climate Walk will inspire students to take responsibility for protecting natural resources such as freshwater and biodiversity, motivating them to engage in conservation efforts in their own communities.

Experiencing the beauty and complexity of Kato Zakros Gorge firsthand, combined with expert guidance and discussion, will leave a lasting impression on students, making the learning experience engaging and impactful.

**Organised by the Country Coordinator in Greece INZEB, in collaboration with
the Region of Crete**



ΠΕΡΙΦΕΡΕΙΑ ΚΡΗΤΗΣ
REGION OF CRETE

TAKE INDIVIDUAL ACTION

Join over 500,000 participants and keep track of your climate action so you can help create a greener, more prosperous future for all!

The European Climate Pact has joined forces with ACT NOW, the United Nations campaign to inspire people to act on climate change and sustainability, and AWorld, the mobile app supporting citizens to take individual action.

Anyone can use the AWorld app to reduce their carbon footprint through daily activities and take measurable steps towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

