



Stop the flooding of Alliano!

Save Alliano for the present and future generations!

JOINT INTERNATIONAL APPEAL TO THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT

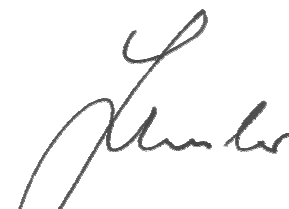
20 March 2007

We, the undersigned, European and global organisations concerned with cultural heritage conservation, education and interpretation - which together reflect the opinion of millions of citizens and of the professional world - express our deep concern at the alarming and imminent threat to Alliano, an outstanding archaeological Roman Bath complex situated near Bergama in Turkey. We support the widespread opposition - already expressed by many Turkish experts and citizens' associations and also by high representatives of the EU Institutions - to the announced flooding of Alliano, to follow the finalisation of the Yortanlı Dam.

We deplore the fact that in November 2006, the Regional Commission for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage in Izmir accepted the proposal made by the Turkish State Water Works to halt further excavations at the site and to proceed with the flooding of the area. In deciding so, the above regional body did not give due consideration to the recommendations made by the Special Scientific Committee, set up last year by the Turkish Minister of Culture. These recommendations included a series of alternative conservation measures which could be undertaken before the possible flooding of the area, such as the protection of the site by the construction of an earth wall or by the relocation of some of the most important structures of this archaeological site. We believe that there still is time to implement these protective measures.

Alliano is a site of extraordinary cultural and historic significance, a cultural heritage shared by the local communities, the Turkish people, the European citizens and the world as a whole. The responsibility to preserve this site for the present and future generations should therefore also be shared.


In the light of the above, we jointly urge the Turkish Government to postpone the flooding of Alliano, pending the completion of the excavation, data-collection and documentation of the site. We also suggest that during this period, the Turkish Government commission an in-depth study of the social, cultural and economic benefits which could be generated for the wider region by a possible development of Alliano into a cultural and health tourism centre. We believe that this should be considered as a serious sustainable development alternative to the foreseen local economic benefits associated with the creation of an irrigation reservoir whose effective life-span is not expected to exceed 50 years. We encourage the Turkish Government to explore the possibility of obtaining European or international support for the financing of such a feasibility study and are prepared to endorse any possible application for such funds.



Dr. Andrea H. Schuler
Executive President
Europa Nostra



Dr. Predrag Novakovic
Secretary General
European Association of Archaeologists



Prof. Michael Petzet
President
ICOMOS