

The German MEP called for tackling “the problem of mass-tourism in order to protect our nature and therefore to ensure our livelihood” – German Manuela Ripa has called for protecting the environment and cultural heritage of Greece's Acheloos Valley.

Speaking in a video message from Brussels during a conference in Greece, Ripa from the European Parliament's Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance stressed that the focus of her political party, the ecologic democratic party ÖDP in Germany, is to protect the environment and to tackle climate change.

Ripa highlighted Acheloos Valley's natural beauty and cultural heritage. “We must protect this rich beauty, this glorious environment, and we must keep it clean to pass it on to our children and to future generations,” she said.

She called for a limitation in visitor numbers – only the right number of people per season, in order not to destroy the ecosystem. “A kind of lottery with a limited number of places. If all lottery tickets are used up, people can visit the following year. Lottery by the way was an instrument to guarantee democracy in ancient Greece parallel to elections,” Ripa said. “I know lottery sounds a little awkward in this sector, but for some very valuable and sensitive ecosystems I do not see any other solution at the moment: as long as people have not learned to have more respect for nature and its surroundings. This would also make the visited places more special and more valuable, since not everyone is able to access them at any one time,” she said.

“In the coming years, and as history has recently shown us with COVID-19, we need to pay close attention to environmental protection and to the development of sustainable alternative tourism. Especially in areas such as yours, the Acheloos Valley, special emphasis should be given to this type of tourism model. The advantages of your area call for any kind of alternative tourism which will also preserve the rare beauty of the environment,” the German MEP said.

Ripa said, “It is not only politicians who need to set the right parameters it is also up to every single one of us to help to preserve our planet”.

Tourism is a wonderful thing,” the MEP said. “It helps to broaden the mind, to discover the beauty of our planet, of Europe and of your wonderful valley. It gives employment to people in the region. But the tourism that we experience at the moment tends to go in the wrong direction,” Ripa warned, noting that when tourism turns into “Mass-tourism” it soon begins to be a huge problem for the ecosystems of the places being visited. It destroys nature and it can change the character of small villages.

Source: neweurope.eu



Europe needs to tackle the issue of Greece's Acheloos Valley and protect its environment