

# euRONATUR STIFTUNG

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Mr. Edi Rama  
Prime Minister of Albania  
Kryeministria  
Bulevardi "Dëshmorët e Kombit"  
Tirana  
ALBANIA

Gabriel Schwaderer  
Executive Director

February 2, 2018

Open letter: Planned construction of an international airport in the Narta-Vjosa Protected Landscape

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

We have noted with deep concern that the Government of Albania plans to develop a new international airport near Vlora in the southwestern part of Albania. Apparently, the planned location for this airport lies entirely within the Narta-Vjosa Protected Landscape (IUCN category VI). The Narta-Vjosa ecosystem is one of the largest near-natural wetland complexes along the Adriatic coast and internationally recognized as a Key Biodiversity Area. It has a central role for bird migration along the Adriatic Flyway and has been officially nominated as a candidate Emerald site.

It goes without saying that the construction of an international airport in this sensitive location will pose irreversible damage to the ecosystem of Narta-Vjosa and even the whole Adriatic coast.

In your capacity as Prime minister of Albania we call on you to ensure that the necessary strategic and environmental impact assessments for the planning and construction of such a large infrastructure project are undertaken according to international standards. We are convinced that any seriously conducted assessment can only come to the conclusion that the planned airport is incompatible with the protection of the Narta-Vjosa ecosystem. We believe that Albania, as a party of the most important multilateral environmental agreements (Ramsar, Bern Convention, Bonn

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Convention), cannot afford to lose one of its natural crown jewels along the Adriatic coast.

Sincerely,



Gabriel Schwaderer  
(Executive Director EuroNatur)

CC:

Dr Bradnee Chambers, Executive Secretary CMS (Bonn Convention)  
Dr Jacques Trouvilliez, Executive Secretary AEWA  
Dr Tobias Salathé, Senior Adviser to the Ramsar Convention in Europe  
Ilir Meta, President of the Republic of Albania  
Iva Obretenova, Secretary of the Bern Convention  
Michaela Matuella, European Commission, DG NEAR  
Romana Vlahutin, Head of the EU Delegation to Albanian  
Susanne Schütz, German Ambassador in Albania

