



UEM ECO-TOUR 2009 - Report on the UEM tree planting on the 31st October in Greece

Introduction

In 2008, we thought it was appropriate to prove that the European Motorcycle Union has always had a great interest in the problems experienced by its affiliated federations in the non-sportive field.

The Idea was that an ECO Tour travelling through different countries would pass the message that the European Motorcycling World acts in a responsible way and wishes to continue to participate in future environmental activities.

After a dialogue with the Chairmen of the Non-Sporting Commissions, the idea was born, also to contribute, in addition, to the reforestation of the forests destroyed by the series of fires we experienced in Europe in the last few years.

The 1st UEM ECO Tour project, with these 2 objectives, was a great success and it deserves to be repeated in the years to come.

Daniel Barthélemy,
2nd UEM Deputy President
President of the Non-Sporting Council

Report

After the great success of the 1st UEM ECO-TOUR held in Luxembourg and France from 22-24 June 2009, the concrete project related to this tour finally was realized in Greece on the 31st October 2009.

The idea was to donate 1000 trees to one of the areas in Europe, which were terribly affected by the 2009 forest fires, with the aim to replant a special area with the trees donated by motorcyclists. The chosen country was Greece, which is one of the countries suffering the most from these fires. For the success of this project, it was very important that we could count on the solidarity of our member Federations.

Thanks to the participants of the UEM ECO-Tour and the donations made by UEM and FIM, the UEM, in cooperation with *Clean-up-Greece* and the city of Kalivia, was able to plant, with the support of 200 students of a local private Lyceum "Kosteas – Geitonas", 1000 trees for the Region of Attica, where wild fires have destroyed huge parts of the bushes, hedges and forests on the mountain "Panion Oros" around Kalivia. This number of trees was even increased by 600, donated by the Mayor of

Kalivia. The support of the UEM to this plantation includes also its watering during the next 3 years.

Greek citizens, politicians and also the press were much interested in what the UEM had intended by creating this ECO-Tour.

At 09:30 , many people had joined the meeting in the Town Hall of Kalivia, where the Mayor, Mr Petros Filippou, HE the Ambassador of Luxembourg in Greece, Mr Conrad Bruch, *Clean up Greece* Chairman, Mrs. Carla Manolopoulou, and the representative of UEM, Mr Michel Turk, in the Presence of UEM Vice-President, Mr Angelos Bavellas, have held their speeches and explained about the UEM ECO-TOUR.

Then 3 buses and a convoy of cars with more than 200 people took the road up to the mountain.

The day there started rough, 12 degrees with heavy storms (8 Beaufort) and rain. After all the material and the trees have been unloaded and carried away, all the participants started to descent the steep mountain. It was rather difficult to go down and find the way between rocks and burned bushes, but also between “new” hedges that have found their way back to live after the wild fires almost 3 years ago.

It was very pleasant for everyone to be part of this tree planting because everyone was aware of the importance of this action and to prevent the nature being “dead” in a close future.

At around 13:00, all trees were planted.

Everybody then climbed up the mountain to meet for a warm coffee or tea, sandwiches and sweets.

Next year, on the occasion of the 2nd UEM ECO-TOUR in May 2010, that is planned to head to Athens, the Tour participants would inspect the “UEM-Forest” and inaugurate the plate commemorating the UEM Tree-planting initiative from October 31st 2009. They would of course also give a hand in watering the trees that have been planted the year before.

The UEM sincerely hopes that many FMN's, the Industry and private motorcyclists will join and support the UEM ECO-TOUR 2010 to Athens.

What would be more encouraging than the comment of 2 Greek ladies: “*We are just normal Greek people and we want to thank the UEM for what you have done for us*”.

Angelos Bavellas
UEM Vice-President

Michel Turk
Vice-Chairman of the UEM Tourism Commission

For photos of the reforestation click here:

<http://www.uem-moto.eu/Media/Photos/tabid/197/AlbumID/1416-8/Default.aspx>