



This case represents an example of a policy related best practice approach with regards to exploitation of aggregates from primary sources

SCALE

Regional approach: the national plan provides a framework which is then detailed in regional and local plans

TYPE OF EXPLORATION

Open-pit exploration

MINERAL RESOURCES

Aggregates



Greece

Mineral and land use planning procedures with emphasis on best practice example of aggregate resources' exploitation

The production of primary aggregates in Greece is mainly performed, within legally bounded areas, the Quarrying Areas (QAs), determined at the Regional Administrative level. The delineation of the QAs constitutes the basic institutional tool for the sustainable management of aggregates' production from primary sources in Greece.

This case highlights how mineral planning procedures are integrated into land use planning procedures. It also describes how a national level policy tool for safeguarding the exploitation of primary aggregates resources is implemented on Regional and Local Administration levels.

The defined QAs, do not modify their character and are not affected by subsequent acts related to urban, spatial or forestry provisions. They are determined with a decision issued by the competent Regional Governor, after consultation with a committee with representatives from all competent authorities, including a representative from the Institute of Geology and Mineral Exploration of Greece.

For the delineation of an area as QA, the following are considered:

1. Criteria related to quality characteristics of the rocks and adequacy of resources to cover local needs;
2. Spatial criteria, such as the National Spatial Strategy, the Special Spatial Plans and the Regional Spatial Plans, distance from the consumption centers etc.;
3. Environmental criteria;
4. Criteria related to sustainability and safety issues (e.g. the safety of the workers and the surrounding communities, the sustainable exploitation of the resources);
5. Criteria related to the protection of archaeological and cultural heritage.

Once the delineation of an area as Aggregates' "Quarrying Area" has been legally defined, the extraction of aggregates from the licensed companies within the area, has priority, over all other activities, for the time span the licenses are valid.

Key success factors of the specific case study include:

- Establishment of a policy tool for the sustainable management of aggregate resources;
- Integration of the Quarrying Areas into the Regional and Local Spatial plans;
- Facilitation and simplification of the licensing procedures;
- Prioritisation of extraction.