

New findings in the Petrified Forest of Lesvos Global Geopark:

Geoconservation and public awareness

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The project "Construction - upgrade of the Kalloni-Sigri Road on Lesvos Island" is funded by the Operational Programme "Improvement of Accessibility" NSRF 2007 - 2013, and involves the upgrading of the existing Kalloni-Sigri road which is 48.5 km long. This new road will limit the geographical isolation of western Lesvos. The Kalloni - Sigri road runs through the protected area of the Petrified Forest of Lesvos.

The area is well known for its fossiliferous sites, as indicated by the number of fossils visible on the surface. In the frames of the main construction project, a sub-project was approved dealing with the research and fossil excavation that has been implemented by the Natural History Museum of the Lesvos Petrified Forest in the frames of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Museum and the Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport and Networks. During the road construction works, dozens of fossilized tree trunks were discovered, standing or decumbent and in an excellent state of preservation. Horizons of leaves, branches and tree root systems were also identified. Fossils found in the path of the roadway were transported carefully to the Museum after cleaning and taking the necessary protective measures. In other places there are clusters of standing petrified trunks. Efforts have been made to preserve these fossils in their original positions. There is no doubt that this rescue excavation of fossils is the largest of its kind so far in Greece, both in terms of surface area and of number of findings.