



**ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI
PRESS OFFICE**

ph. (+30)2310 997158 e-mail: press@auth.gr

Administration Building «K. Karatheodori» AUTH, P.C. 541 24, Thessaloniki

[f @Aristoteleio](https://www.facebook.com/Aristoteleio) [i @authuniversity](https://www.instagram.com/authuniversity) [X @Auth_University](https://www.x.com/Auth_University)

PRESS RELEASE

**Aristotle University Develops Greece's First National Satellite-Based
Forest Monitoring System**

Thessaloniki, 30 June 2026

The first comprehensive operational application for monitoring forest ecosystems at the national level, using advanced Earth observation technologies and high-resolution satellite data, has been developed through the SAT4FOREST – Forest Monitoring Service research project, coordinated by Aristotle University.

The project, which began in August 2024 and concludes in June 2026, forms part of the national initiative to develop Greece's microsatellite programme. It is implemented with the support of the Hellenic Space Center and the European Space Agency.

The Scientific Coordinator of the project is Professor Ioannis Gitas, Director of the Laboratory of Forest Management and Remote Sensing in the School of Forestry and Natural Environment at Aristotle University.

A "Space-Based Eye" for Greece's Forests

As part of the SAT4FOREST project, the research team developed two core services: forest type and forest fuel mapping, and the monitoring of forest ecosystems and Natura 2000 sites. These services use high spatial and temporal resolution multispectral, hyperspectral, and Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) satellite data.

The advanced technologies generate maps of forest species, forest fuel, and biodiversity, while also identifying risks and pressures affecting forest ecosystems and protected areas.

The project's results are expected to make a significant contribution to understanding the condition of natural resources, assessing environmental risks, and supporting the design of effective forest management policies.

The data and products developed through the project serve the Central Forest Service, Regional Forest Directorates and local Forest Offices across Greece, the Ministries of Environment and Energy and Climate Crisis and Civil Protection, as well as research institutes, universities, and public and private organisations that produce downstream applications, such as risk maps and wildfire spread simulations.

The use of satellite data enables rapid and cost-effective monitoring of the entire Greek territory, with the capability to update information at least twice a year, or more frequently whenever necessary. Although field measurements remain essential for developing and validating the models, the new service provides a powerful decision-support tool.

During a meeting held on Thursday, 18 June 2026, with the Rector of Aristotle University, Professor Kyriakos Anastasiadis, the scientific team and representatives of the participating organisations presented an update on the progress of the SAT4FOREST programme, which has now entered its final phase and has already delivered significant research and operational outcomes. The participants also discussed the prospect of additional funding, which would support the further development of the existing products and the expansion of their capabilities. This would substantially enhance the services provided to end users while strengthening the long-term impact and exploitation of the programme's results.

Among those attending the meeting were the Scientific Coordinator of SAT4FOREST and Director of the Laboratory of Forest Management and Remote Sensing, Professor Ioannis Gitas, Assistant Professor Dimitrios Stavrakoudis of the School of Forestry and Natural Environment, and representatives of the participating organisations.

The SAT4FOREST project is implemented under the Microsatellite Programme of the Ministry of Digital Governance and is funded by the Recovery and Resilience Facility. Two indicative maps illustrating the results of the SAT4FOREST project are attached.

We kindly request that this event be published, broadcast, and covered by the media.