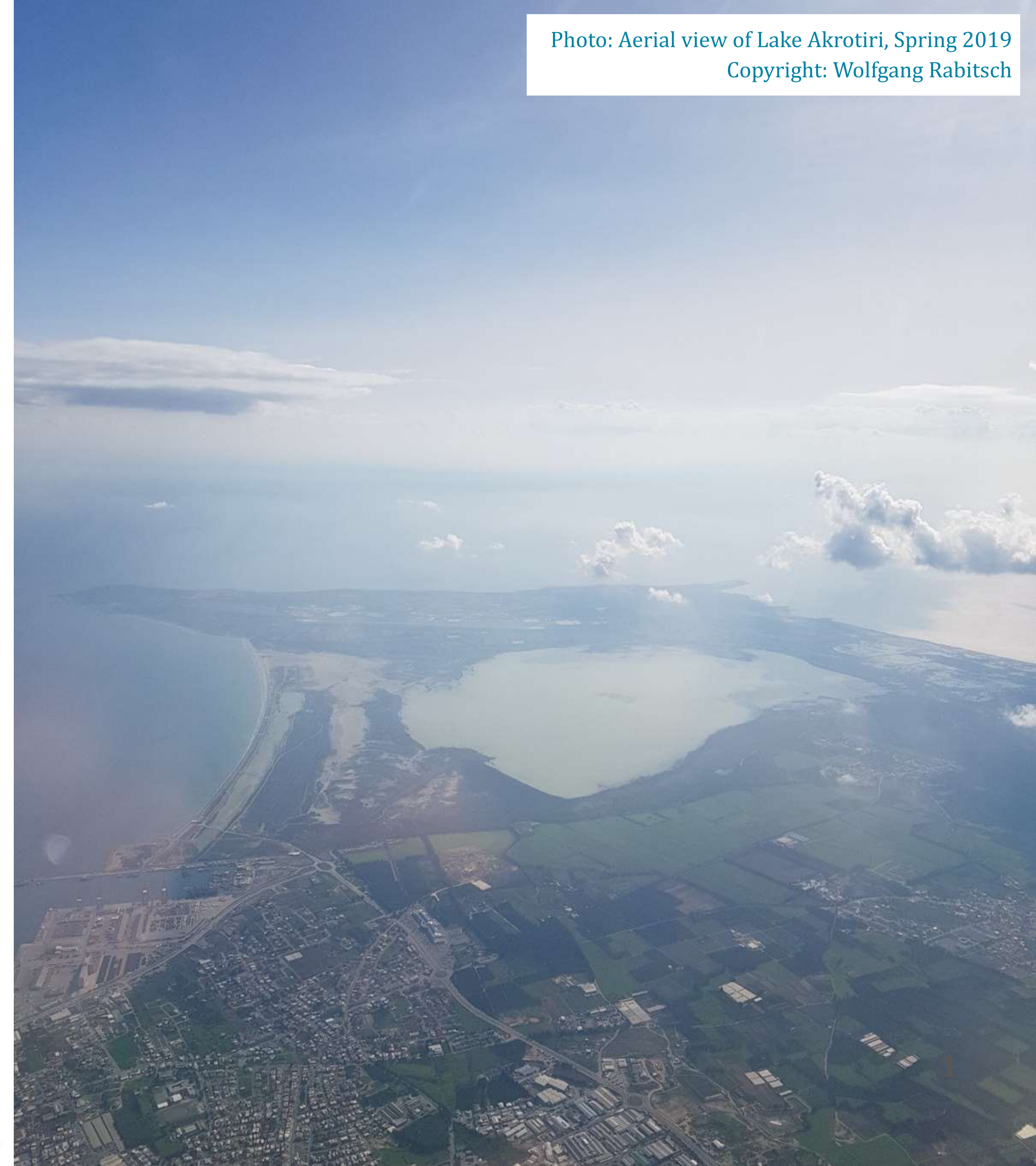


# Wetlands

Why are they important and  
how are they changing?





# Importance

Wetlands provide many benefits for people and the environment, they:

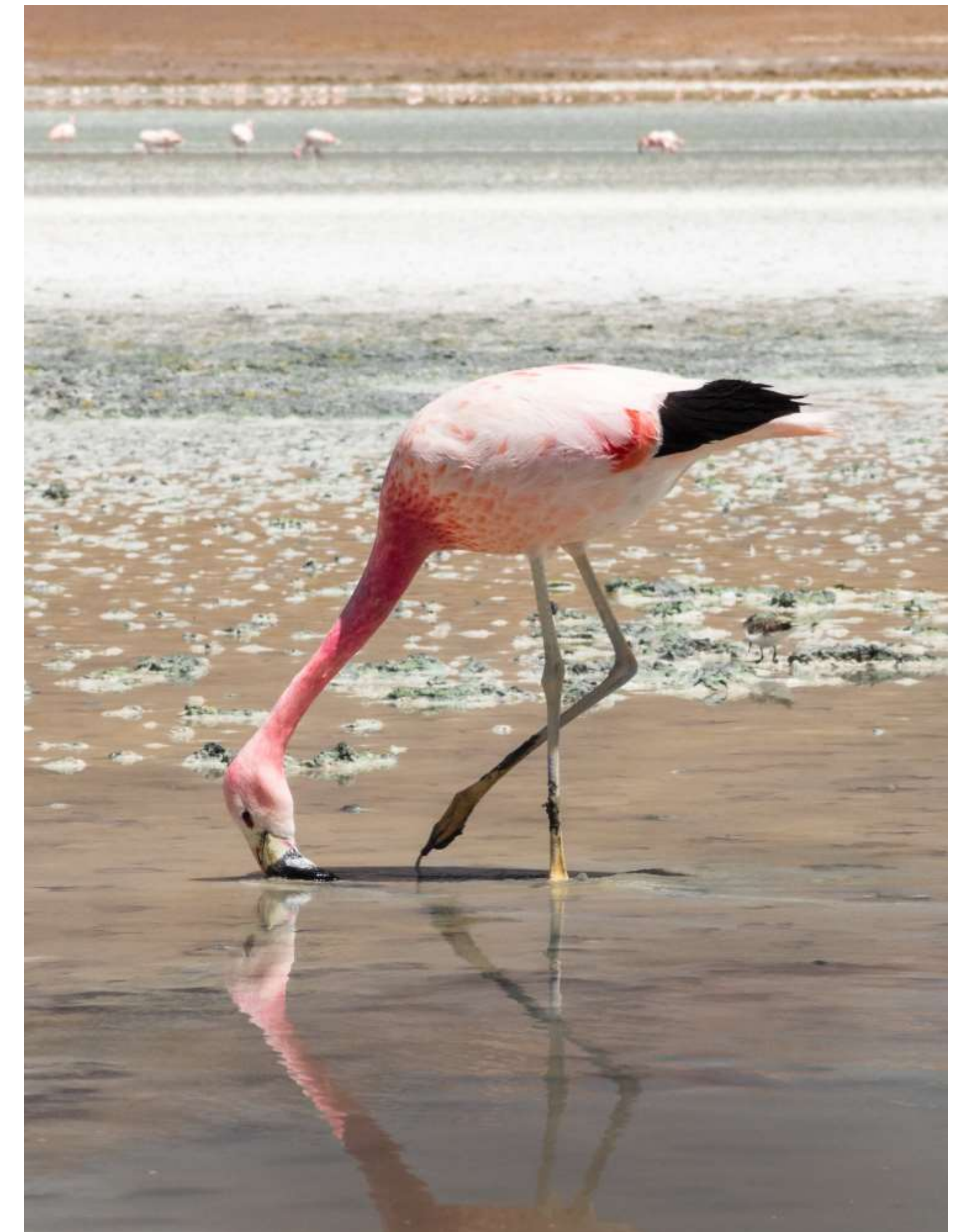
- Protect coasts from erosion.
- Minimise the effects of floods.
- Absorb pollutants to improve water quality.
- Provide important habitats for plants and animals that are not found any where else.





# Salt Lakes

- Akrotiri Salt Lake supports lots of wildlife and many water-birds. **Flamingos** and **ducks** stay throughout the winter.
- Important species like **Kentish plovers** and **Black-winged stilts** breed in lake surroundings every year.
- Large **flocks of cranes** and many raptor species use the area on their long migratory trips from Europe to Africa in autumn and back in spring.





# Saltmarshes

- Saltmarshes provide a home for many plants like **reeds**, **rushes**, **sedges** and **glassworts**.
- Some saltmarsh plants growing around Akrotiri Salt Lake are rare and **endangered** in Cyprus.
- These habitats also host many water-birds like herons and ducks, including the endangered **Ferruginous Duck**.





# Sand Dunes

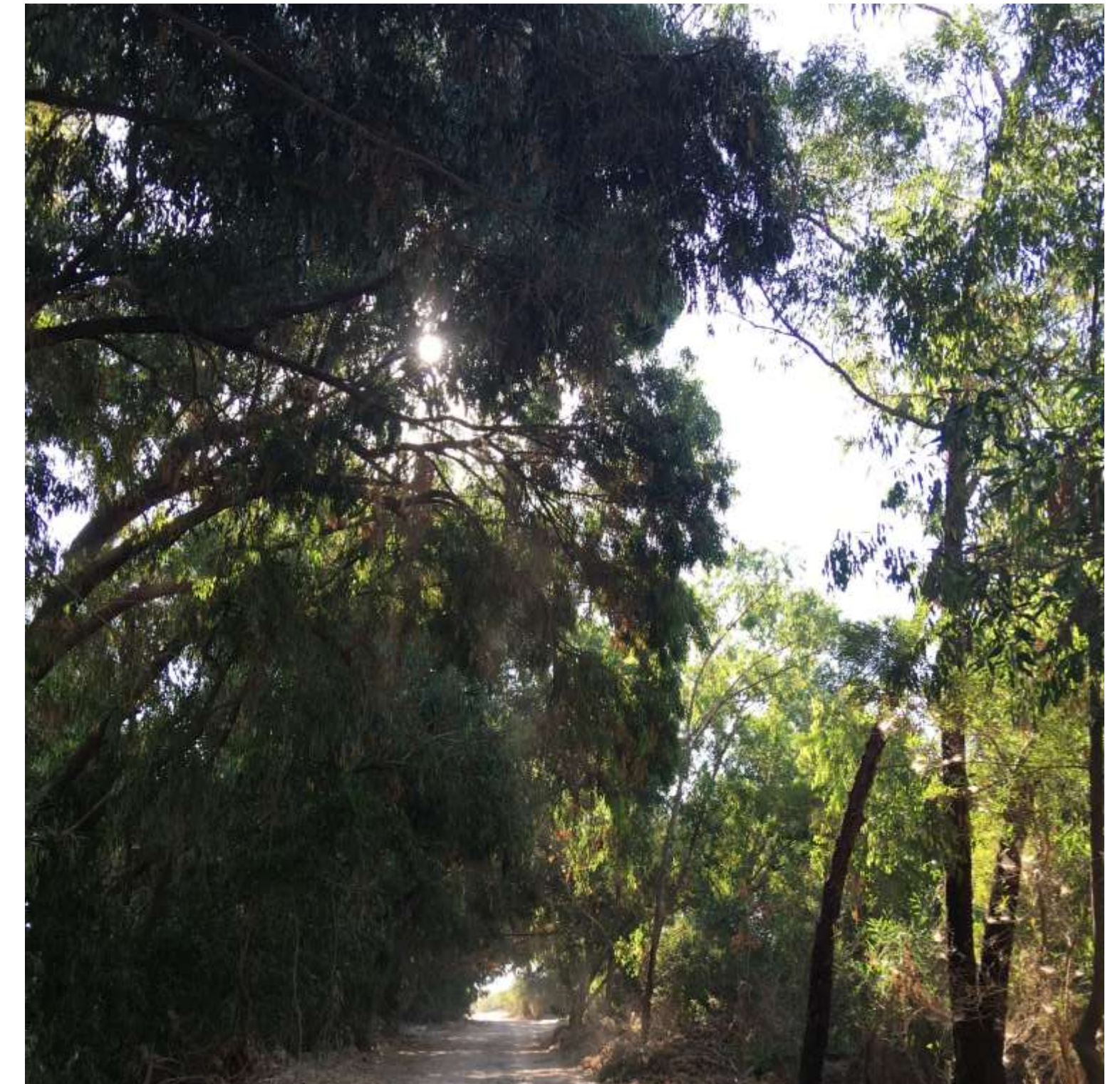
- Sand dunes can form part of **coastal environments**, such as those at **Lady's Mile beach**.
- They support lots of plants including the **Sea Daffodil**.
- These sand dunes are **very special** as there are **not many of them in Cyprus**.
- It is important to treat these shifting dunes respectfully so that they are around for everyone to see and enjoy.





# Invasive alien species

- The **Eucalyptus forest** in the north of Akrotiri Salt Lake was planted with Australian trees to **drain the marshes** and **reduce wetland habitat for mosquitoes**. This forest is a strong feature of the area and home to native species, and migrating birds.
- *Acacia saligna* is an **invasive alien species** planted across Cyprus for firewood and to reduce soil erosion. **Acacia** produces lots of flowers which bees like but can outcompete native plant species for space and water.





# Mosquitoes

- Mosquitoes are often considered pests and as vectors for human diseases.
- But they are an important part of any ecosystem and are often found in wetland environments.
- Mosquitoes provide an **important food source for birds and fish**.
- The males can also **pollinate flowers**.

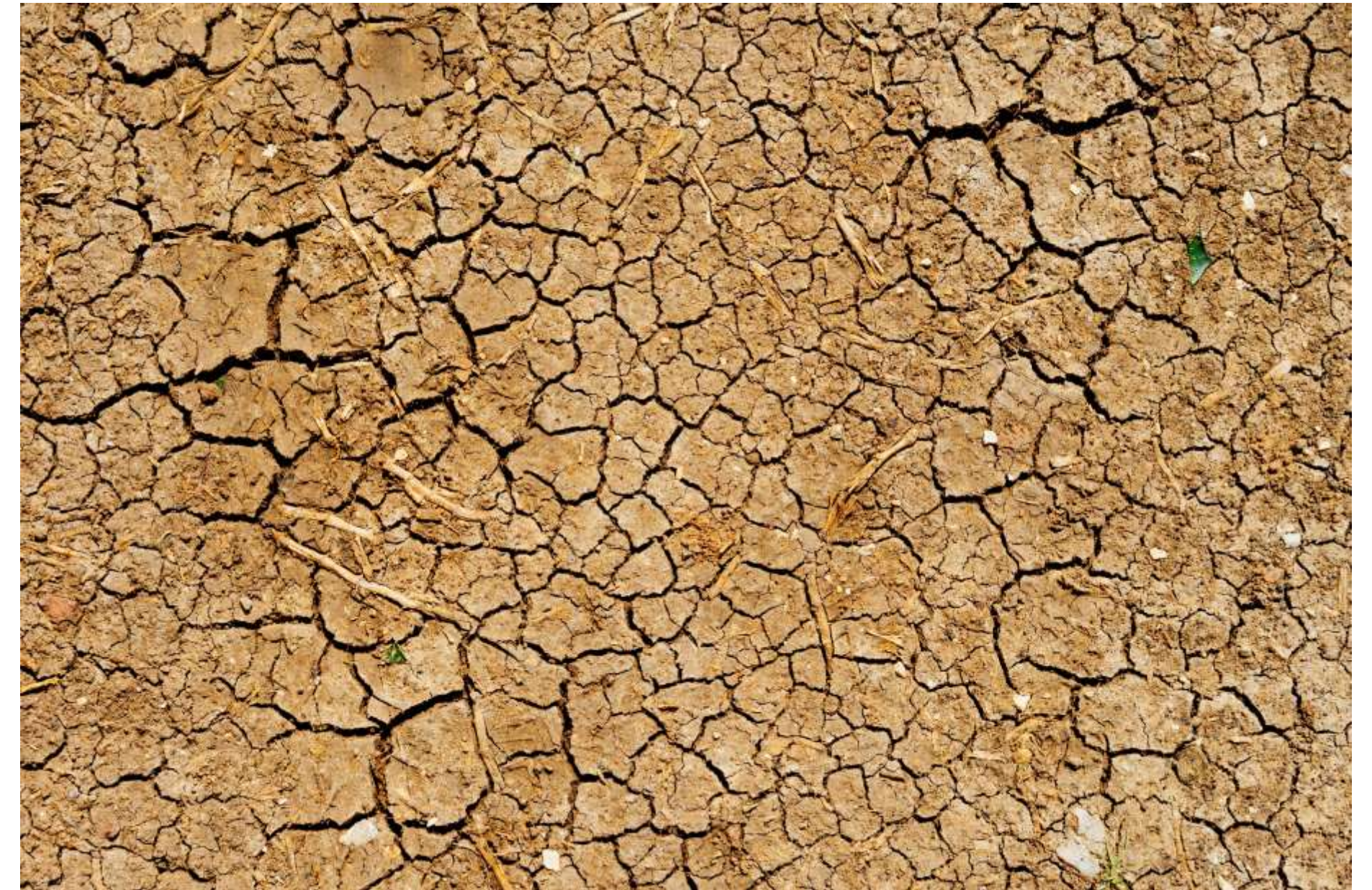


Photo: Surveying for mosquito larvae, Phasouri Marsh  
Copyright: RIS-ky



# Climate change

- Climate change leads to more **extreme weather events**, such as **extreme rains** or **droughts**.
- Countries like Cyprus may become drier, and wetlands like **Akrotiri** salt lake and marshes might spend longer with **low water levels**.
- Resulting in **negative impacts** on the **plants** and **animals** that depend on the water, including many **rare species**.





# Agriculture

- **Farming** is a very important part of many economies.
- In Akrotiri, **lemons, oranges, olives, cereals** and **potatoes** are grown.
- Some farming activities can damage the environment.
- The use of **chemicals** to kill insects and weed species can harm other plants and animals.
- Reducing the amount of chemicals used can help reduce the negative impact on the natural environment.





# People and Tourism

- People who **live, work** and **visit wetlands** are a very important part of the ecosystem, they can **help look after** these special and sensitive habitats.
- Tourism can be very important to **promote** and **protect wildlife** and **biodiversity**.
- It can be bad for the environment if it means **pollution** from human activities, and if people drop **litter** and **trample** sensitive areas.









# People and Tourism

- People can help protect rare species by sticking to **roads** or **paths** to avoid disturbing plants and animals when moving through wetlands.
- They can make sure they take their rubbish to **bins**.
- Tourism development should always consider the natural environment.
- People can also help by taking part in **volunteer activities**, such as wildlife surveys like [Mini-PoMS-Ký](#).



INSECT Group	Time we started counting:		Time we finished counting:	
	Number counted			
	On Flower	Not on flower		
BEES 				
FLIES 				
BUTTERFLIES and MOTHS 				
BEETLES 				
OTHER INSECTS (e.g. Bugs, Grasshoppers, Wasps, Dragonflies etc.,)				
OTHER INVERTEBRATES (e.g. Spiders, Millipedes, Snails etc.,)				



# Thank you

Any questions?



**Akrotiri Environmental  
Education Centre**  
Κέντρο Περιβαλλοντικής Εκπαίδευσης Ακρωτηρίου



Joint Services Health Unit



Researching Invasive Species in K  yros

Lake Akrotiri, June 2019  
Photo copyright: Emily Trill