

# Greeks Set To Ban Google Street View

It seems that authorities in Greece are not at all convinced by the benefits offered by Google's Street View application and have decided to stop the search giant from adding any more images from Greece to its controversial application.

Raising serious concerns related to privacy issues, the Hellenic Data Protection Authority (HDP) has passed an order restricting Google from taking any images for Street View till it offers additional information that the agency seeks.

The authority has explicitly asked Google to clarify the duration for which the captured images will be retained and also inquired about the steps that the search giant wants follow for protecting the privacy rights of people captured on camera

In a statement the HDP mentioned "The authority has reserved judgment on the legality of the service pending the submission of additional information, and until that time will not allow

Google to start gathering photographs."

Incidentally the authority had previously stopped a comparable mapping service operated by the Greek company Kapou and many believe it was a matter of time till Google's Street View would have come into its radar.

Greece is not the only country where Google Street View has courted controversies and latest order only highlights the kind of challenges it may experience in near future.



## First Cyclists' Demonstration in Greece

ATHENS—"It was perfect... Let's do this again," a cyclist's comment posted to the Podilates webpage after participating in an open bike rally that took place across Greece on Sunday May 10.

Cyclists all over Greece hopped on their bikes to promote cycling as an alternative to automobiles and buses, and to ask the Greek government to:

1. Allow the transportation of the bikes inside the metro.
2. Construct more bicycle paths throughout Greece, starting in Athens where pollution from vehicle exhaust fumes is so severe.
3. Include cyclist arm signals in the Department of Transportation driving codes to make it safer for bike riders.
4. Encourage people to use cycling as a means of transportation and promote "cycling culture" so more people will use this mode of transportation, which other European countries have been doing for many years.

This first bike rally was deemed a success as about 10,000 cyclists took to the streets to protest in this unusual way in Greece.

Bicycles offer several advantages over other forms of transportation as they are easy to park, and they don't create noise pollution or fill the air with noxious fumes that can have an effect on climate change.

Also, cycling is just plain good for your health. It has positive economic benefits for the government, the environment, and to the riders themselves.

Greek cyclists will organize more bike rallies to raise awareness about other sensitive issues, and all socially conscious people are encouraged to participate.

The next bike rally is planned for May 23 to protest the destruction of green areas near the Athens Airport that are being used to make roads for automobiles.

# Greek dolphins to disappear without urgent steps

*ATHENS (Reuters) - Common dolphins, once a frequent sight in the Mediterranean, may soon be extinct in Greece's Ionian Sea due to overfishing, environmentalists warned on Wednesday.*

WWF and a dozen other environmental organizations said research showed numbers of dark-grey, white-bellied dolphins had decreased from 150 to 15 in 10 years in protected areas in the Ionian, between Greece and Italy.

"It is called the common dolphin but the problem nowadays in the Mediterranean is that it's not common at all anymore. It is endangered. It is about to be extinct," WWF Greece-based expert Giorgos Paximadis said.

"Overfishing has caused the destruction of the marine environment and the dramatic decrease of common dolphins," Paximadis told Reuters, adding that it deprived the



*A dolphin jumps out of the sea, playing with a fishing boat off the coast of the central Aegean island of Alonissos*

dolphins of their food.

The environmental groups urged Greece to take measures, including the adoption of larger mesh size for all bottom-set nets, restrictions on trawling and on recreational fishing as well as stronger penalties for illegal fishing.

The common dolphin population

in the Ionian Sea is one of the last in the Mediterranean, Paximadis said. "As they are on the top of food web, it shows that the rest of the marine web is not healthy," he said.

Three other species of dolphins in Greece, including the bottlenose dolphin, are considered vulnerable but not yet in danger of extinction, he said.

# Networking saves new mother

Dubai: The power of social networking in the UAE was highlighted this week when hundreds of residents responded to a new mother in need of a blood transfusion. **Kristy Anson, a 34-year-old Australian**, delivered a baby by Caesarean section on Saturday morning at the American Hospital Dubai.

However, during the operation, her haemoglobin levels dropped below normal and she needed a transfusion of O negative blood.

There was only one unit of her blood type in stock at the hospital. Thus, doctors issued a request for further supplies from Al Wasl and Sharjah, but to no avail.



**Kristy's husband George Anson**, a pilot with Emirates, grew increasingly concerned and decided to text his neighbour with an appeal for help, who in turn forwarded the message to as many people as possible.

The message soon

appeared on numerous internet forums and spread on social networking websites, including Facebook and Twitter.

Within hours, hundreds of people had pledged their support offering to donate blood for the cause. In the end, their help was not required as sufficient supplies arrived from the Abu Dhabi Blood Bank on Monday evening.

**George, a 49-year-old of Greek-British descent**, said: "The process of giving blood in the UAE should be simplified and hospitals should have a database of people they can contact in emergencies such as this. However, I am really touched by the response to my plea for help. I have literally had hundreds of phone calls over the last few days; it really is very moving and proves there are a lot of kind people out there. **I have even had messages from as far afield as Sydney.**

"It is only really when something like this happens to a loved one that you begin to realise just how important donating blood really is. The public need to be educated through the media and awareness campaigns because if people know exactly what is involved in giving blood they are more likely to actually do it."