

Belediye Başkanı – Ahmet Çıaca,  
Akyaka Belediyesi,  
Akyaka,  
Ula/Muğla,  
Türkiye.

30 June 2011

Dear Ahmet Bey,

Please forgive me for writing to you in English.

You may remember that you came to my photographic exhibition in 2008 and I sent you some photographs later the same year.

I am writing to you about the destruction of the river bank along the North side of the Kadın Azmak, from the Cennett Restaurant to the harbour – nearly one kilometre. I was witness to some of this destruction, done by a JCB digger scraping-up the bottom of the river bank and ripping-out the reed-beds.

I remember you telling me the great pleasure you got from my photograph of the geese on the Azmak – a photograph I can no longer take since the river bank has now been destroyed. Please see the photographs at the end of this letter, which clearly show some of the awful state of the river.

I do not know how this happened but I do know this is a very bad thing for Akyaka. What will the tourists and visitors in the summer think ? Not good, I believe.

Furthermore, Akyaka is now under international attention since it is now an accredited Cittaslow and it has been part of international environmental studies. What will the international community think about this kind of reckless environmental destruction ?

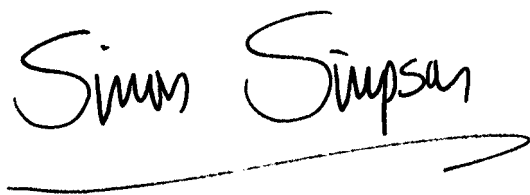
Clearly the river needs to be restored to its former state – the rocks need to be carefully placed back in the river (not scraped back by a JCB digger) and the reed-beds need to be replanted or encouraged to grow once again. Fortunately, this is damage that can be reversed. But action needs to be taken quickly before some of the restaurants start using the cleared areas as car parks.

May I, most respectfully, make the following suggestions:

1. The river is immediately restored to its former condition. The rocks and stones need to be carefully returned to the river bed and the river bank restored. This needs to be done sensitively, and with manual labour without using a JCB digger.
2. The reed-beds need to be encouraged to re-grow, and where they cannot they need to be replanted.
3. The restaurants and business along the river bank need to be told not to use the newly cleared areas as they will be restored. Barriers need to be put up to protect these areas from further damage.
4. An environmental restoration and protection plan needs to be drawn up for the river area and approved by the Kent Koseyi.
5. May I most respectfully suggest that you and your staff go on some environmental management courses to learn how to manage the environment in a sympathetic and sensitive way. I also suggest visiting European environmental organisations and groups to learn how they manage their environments in a sustainable way.
6. An officer, with environmental management qualifications, is appointed the Belediye staff – whose responsibility is for the protection and management of the environment of Akyaka.

Ahmet Bey, I am certain you will agree that the river needs to be restored to its former natural state. I will be coming to Akyaka at the end of July and I am looking forward to seeing how you will have progressed in restoring the river.

My very good wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simon Simpson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. Below the name, there is a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line that extends across the width of the signature.

P.S. My congratulations on your recent marriage. I wish you and your wife every happiness together.

