

# TURKEY

## Dam Constructions: Allianoi and Hasankeyf

As was already announced in *Heritage at Risk 2008–2010* (p. 180) the Roman bath complex of Allianoi has in the meantime been flooded and is now completely covered by a water reservoir of the Yortanlı Dam. Wide-spread public protest at least enabled a delay of the flooding so that archaeologists were able to make extensive excavations and eventually to ensure that the site be protected with sand before the flooding began.

More than ten years of archaeological digs revealed stunning discoveries of architecture, mosaics, sculptures and artefacts, as well as new evidence of Roman lifestyle and healing practices. Then from April until autumn 2010, Turkish authorities sand-filled the site and at the end of 2010 they started filling the reservoir behind the Yortanlı Dam. Allianoi will now remain under 30 metres of water and a build-up of estimated 18 metres of silt at least for the next 50 years.

Europa Nostra points out that Turkish “authorities will have learned that archaeological explorations of a site must be made before locating potentially destructive engineering works” and that “the vigorous Allianoi campaign acted as a rallying factor for Turkey’s heritage community and raised general public awareness of the issues involved” (see <http://www.europanostra.org/allianoi/>).

At Hasankeyf (see also H@R 2008–2010, p. 180 and H@R 2006/07, p. 156 f.), the flooding of the ancient town on the Tigris River and of its archaeological sites has not yet started, but will very likely happen once the Ilisu Dam has been completed (plans are to finish the dam in 2014). The water reservoir will have an approximate size of 313 square kilometres. The dam project does not only threaten the existence of this important ancient town and other sites in this area. It will also lead to an extensive forced relocation of the population in the entire Tigris valley.

John Ziesemer



Filling the archaeological site with sand started in April 2010



Allianoi, sandfill completed

The flooded site of Allianoi in January 2011

