



## ***UNDER 5 HEADINGS*** \_\_\_\_\_ **“Strengthening the System of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas of Turkey”**



## 1 Project Rationale and Project Aim

Some 3,000 plant and animal species have been identified along Turkey's 8,500 km coastline. But Turkey's marine biodiversity is under serious pressure by human kind. The major threats facing Turkey's marine areas are the degradation of marine habitats and ecosystems, the over-harvesting of marine resources and the conversion and/or destruction of coastal habitats. This Project aims to facilitate the expansion of the national system of marine and coastal protected areas and to improve its management effectiveness.

The Project officially commenced in May 2009, and will end in October 2013.

## 2 Project Sites

The Project is being implemented at six sites in Turkey. The Project covers five SEPAs and one Nature Park. The six project areas are:

- Foça SEPA
- Gökova SEPA
- Datça-Bozburun SEPA
- Köyceğiz-Dalyan SEPA
- Fethiye-Göcek SEPA
- Ayvalık Islands Nature Park



## 3 Project Outcomes

The Project will have achieved the following three outcomes:

- Responsible institutions have the capacities and internal structure needed for prioritizing the establishment of new Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MCPAs) and for more effectively managing existing MCPAs
- MCPA financial planning and management systems are facilitating effective business planning, adequate levels of revenue generation and cost-effective management
- Inter-agency coordination mechanisms in place to regulate and manage economic activities within multiple use areas of the MCPAs



## 4 The Project's Contributions to Turkish Environmental Protection

- Contributions to the implementation of the Biological Diversity Convention Programme of Work on Protected Areas which Turkey has been a party will have been implemented.
- The country's system of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas will have been expanded by approximately 100,000 ha, or 44% as compared with baseline levels.
- Fisheries Restricted Areas (FRAs) will have been established within at least two Marine and Coastal Protected Areas and the sustainability of fisheries management achievements will be increased through the extension of a system of FRAs.
- The management capacities of local MCPA authorities will have been strengthened for effectively managing the existing Marine and Coastal Protected Areas.
- The Systems for sustainable Marine and Coastal Protected Area financing will have been strengthened.
- Inter-agency coordinating structures will have been strengthened.
- The agencies and other stakeholders will have been enabled to effectively address both land-based and marine-based threats to marine biodiversity.
- A national-level Marine and Coastal Protected Areas Strategy and Action Plan proposal will have been prepared.
- The sustainability of the MCPA system will have been ensured. The expected stream of positive, long-term impacts on marine biodiversity, and in particular those arising from a shift in current trends, is expected to be able to continue well beyond the Project's completion.

### What is a Marine and Coastal Protected Area?

*Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MCPAs) can be established for different purposes, can be designed in different types and sizes and can be managed in different ways. Therefore, there are many different definitions of an MCPA.*

*The simplest definition of an MCPA is "a mechanism for the conservation of any defined marine area, by means of its legal and physical protection from significant human pressure, thus reserving its inherent natural, historical and cultural features.*

*Such conservation is maintained by appropriately enacted laws and especially through the support and involvement of the local communities and stakeholders.*

*Thus MCPAs have a potentially significant role to play in eliminating threats to marine biodiversity in Turkey.*



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## 5 Who is conducting this project?

The project is funded by the Global Environment Fund (GEF) and executed by the Environmental Protection Agency for Special Areas (EPASA) of the Turkish Ministry of Environment and Forestry, in partnership with the General Directorate for Nature Conservation and National Parks (GDNCNP) of the same Ministry, together with the General Directorate of Control and Protection of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Turkey is the implementing partner of the project.



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Turkish General Staff, the State Planning Organization, the Under-secretariat for Maritime Affairs, the Turkish Coast Guard Command, the Turkish Naval Forces Command, the Ministry of Public Works and Settlement, the Ministry of Transportation and Communication, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Marine and Coastal Management Department and Foreign Relations and EU Department of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, the Provincial Governors, together with such bodies as Local Authorities, universities, research institutes, national and local NGOs and other local representatives, are among the overall stakeholders of the Project.

### Turkey's Marine and Coastal Protected Areas

- Turkey's Mediterranean, Aegean, Marmara and Black Sea coastline is 8,500 km long, excluding the islands. This wide marine and coastal fringe is home to a rich and valuable natural biodiversity. It is an immense and highly important zone, hosting some 3,000 plant and animal species.
- The majority of the existing marine and coastal protected areas are currently managed by EPASA. In addition to these areas, the General Directorate for Nature Conservation and National Parks, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism are authorized to manage and plan the maintenance and careful development of some of the existing marine and coastal protection areas.
- An estimated 240,216 hectares of marine area is presently under legal protection within 30 Marine and Coastal Protected Areas. Currently, about 2.8% of Turkey's territorial waters is so protected.
- Turkey's marine biodiversity is presently under serious pressure by human kind. The major dangers threatening Turkey's marine areas are the degradation of marine habitats and ecosystems, the over-harvesting of marine resources and the destruction of coastal habitats.





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