

# POLICY PAPER FOR POST-2020 SEASCAPES IN TURKEY



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## ACRONYMS

<b>CBD/GBF</b>	Convention on Biological Diversity Post-2020 Global Biological Diversity Framework
<b>CBD</b>	Convention on Biological Diversity
<b>MPA</b>	Marine (and Coastal) Protected Area
<b>EBSA</b>	Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
<b>GEF-SGP</b>	Global Environment Facility - Small Grants Program
<b>ICZM</b>	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
<b>OECM</b>	Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures
<b>KBA</b>	Key Biodiversity Areas
<b>SEPLS</b>	Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



With the financial contributions of the GEF Small Grants Program (SGP Turkey) and MAVFA Foundation, this report summarizes the conclusions of the study 'Policy Dialogue for Post-2020 Seascapes in Turkey.' It features the actions and recommendations that may guide the preparation of a country policy paper until the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) which was scheduled in 2020 as part of the Convention on Biological Diversity Post-2020 Global Framework (CBD/GBF) and the processes and practices to be implemented thereafter.

In the development of the Policy Dialogue, the Seascope approach was adopted. This approach refers to scientifically and strategically defined multi-use marine areas where state institutions, private organizations, and other stakeholders collaborate to ensure the capacity and vision to maintain management of the broad scale required as part of Global Biological Diversity goals, to protect the diversity and prosperity of marine habitats and to enhance human well-being.

The Policy Dialogue set forth the efforts and needs associated with employing the proper means for the protection and effective management of the marine biological diversity and ecosystems in Turkey. Additionally, "Other Effective Area-Based Conservative Measures (OECM)" were evaluated as a significant step forward towards the recognition of areas that ensure in-situ and long-term protection of biological diversity, beyond the protected areas. The significant role played by these measures and the substantial opportunities they offer in the achievement of global biological diversity goals such as the protection of 30 percent of marine and coastal areas by 2030 were also discussed.

Moreover, the relations with Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MPAs), Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs), Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes (SEPLs), and small-scale fisheries have been conceptually addressed, highlighting the importance of the cross-sectoral protection efforts including the management of fisheries through the recognition of ecosystem-based fishery management approaches which enable tangible benefits in the protection of biological diversity and achievement of common goals.

Conducted in the light of this information and these evaluations, this Policy Dialogue for Seascapes formed the basis of a Policy Paper. The preparation of this paper was based on the presentations and implementations of the successful efforts that set the pace in Turkey and carried out individually or collaboratively by public institutions, non-governmental organizations, cooperatives, civil initiatives, and academic representatives working towards protecting Turkey's marine and coastal resources and biological diversity and/or establishing effectively managed marine protection areas.

This Policy Paper was prepared with a focus on implementation-oriented topics (particularly those such as ensuring participation, as well as effective marine and coastal protection) that support the efforts and policies implemented so far in Turkey. It is fundamentally based on the actions developed by three working groups towards the goals of Inclusive Governance; Establishing New Protected Areas and Expanding the Coverage of Marine and Coastal Protection Areas; and Effective Management of Marine and Coastal Protection Areas.

The anticipated short- and mid-term actions designated under the goals set for the protection of seascapes in Turkey and the recommendations regarding the priority issues associated with these actions were examined as part of this report. Following consultations with relevant stakeholders, existing policies and successful local practices, as well as the applicability of the new ideas were presented as part of this policy paper.



By 2030, 30% of Turkey's marine and coastal areas is sufficiently protected through a well-connected and effective system of protected areas and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures.

## GOAL

01

### INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE

- Action 1.** Evaluating the effectiveness of existing MPAs
- Action 2 .**Establishing a local platform consisting of public and civil initiatives / NGOs
- Action 3.** Lobbying through centralized administration
- Action 4.** Ensuring financial sustainability
- Action 5.** Establishing a committee for MPA management
- Action 6.** Completing missing data essential for planning
- Action 7.** Creating data management tools
- Action 8.** Enhancing capacity
- Action 9.** Creating a network of protected areas

### ESTABLISHING NEW PROTECTED AREAS AND EXPANDING THE COVERAGE OF MARINE AND COASTAL PROTECTED AREAS

- Action 1.** Prioritizing areas where integrated planning with freshwater ecosystems (including river basins and wetlands) can be done
- Action 2.** Enhancing awareness on OECEMs and providing guidance for the application of OECEM criteria
- Action 3.** Drawing up an inventory of potential OECEMs that meet the criteria
- Action 4.** Ensuring the monitorability and manageability of OECEM areas

## GOAL

03

### EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF MARINE AND COASTAL PROTECTED AREAS

- Action 1.** Management plans: setting clear and applicable goals
- Action 2.** Capacity building & improvement: enhancing surveillance capacity, creating legal basis, studies on species and habitats
- Action 3.** Resource management: financial and human resources, independent income model, in-kind contributions by decision makers and public institutions

## GOAL

02

The resulting report draft was shared with all the organizations, institutions, and academicians who contributed to the preparation of the policy paper. The feedback offered by the organizations, institutions, and academicians and their suggestions for corrections and additions were evaluated in detail. At the end of this evaluation process, the policy paper was finalized. The anticipated short- and mid-term actions designated under the goals set for the protection of the seascapes in Turkey and the recommendations regarding the priority issues associated with these actions were examined as part of this report. Following consultations with relevant stakeholders, existing policies and successful local practices, as well as the applicability of the new ideas are presented as part of this policy paper.

Turkey has certain obligations both as part of its national legislation aimed at ensuring the protection, conservation, sustainable management, and handing down to future generations of its marine environment and coastal areas and of the provisions of international conventions and protocols and action plans to which it is a party. It is hoped that this policy paper will contribute to the ongoing and future policy, strategy, and implementation efforts by those institutions and organizations that have a part to play in fulfilling Turkey's obligations towards achieving the global goals set for 2030.

# 1. Introduction

Like many other countries, Turkey also recognizes the fundamental importance of the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and seas and their resources for sustainable development. Our oceans and seas are the fundamental components of sustainable development through their contributions to poverty eradication, sustainable economic growth, food safety, creation of sustainable livelihoods and decent work, while at the same time serving as a buffer to the impacts of climate change.

On the other hand, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a shocking impact globally, bringing about a wave of concern for the environment, particularly for biological diversity (Figure 1). In the United Nations Summit on Biodiversity (September 2020), world leaders expressed their commitments and determination towards developing solutions. This summit also stood as the most widely attended meeting on topics associated with the loss of biodiversity so far, with the participation of the highest number of political leaders. Both scientists and government leaders highlighted the necessity of stopping and, if possible, reversing the loss of biodiversity by 2030, and adopting a positive approach to nature.

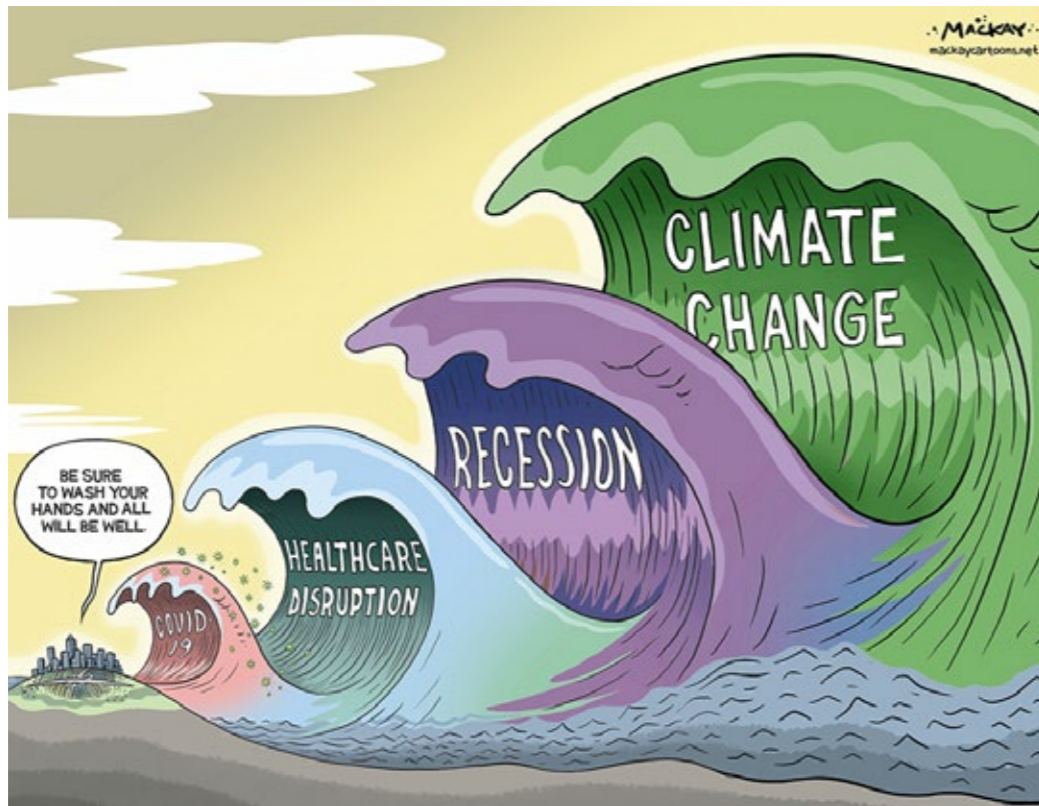


Figure 1: Cumulative effects of environmental disasters

Protecting marine biodiversity hot spots is of vital importance to maintain current catch limits in fishing into the future and to secure aquacultural resources and means of livelihood.

Global efforts to counter the pressures on the limited resources of the oceans and seas and the associated international commitments are aimed at providing further protection for Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MPAs) by establishing MPA networks and implementing wider spatial management practices across nations. For example, while 9.68% of the Mediterranean Basin of which Turkey is also a part is protected through MPAs, the MPAs where effective conservation activities and management plans are implemented correspond to only 1.27% (Gomei et al. 2019, Figure 2).

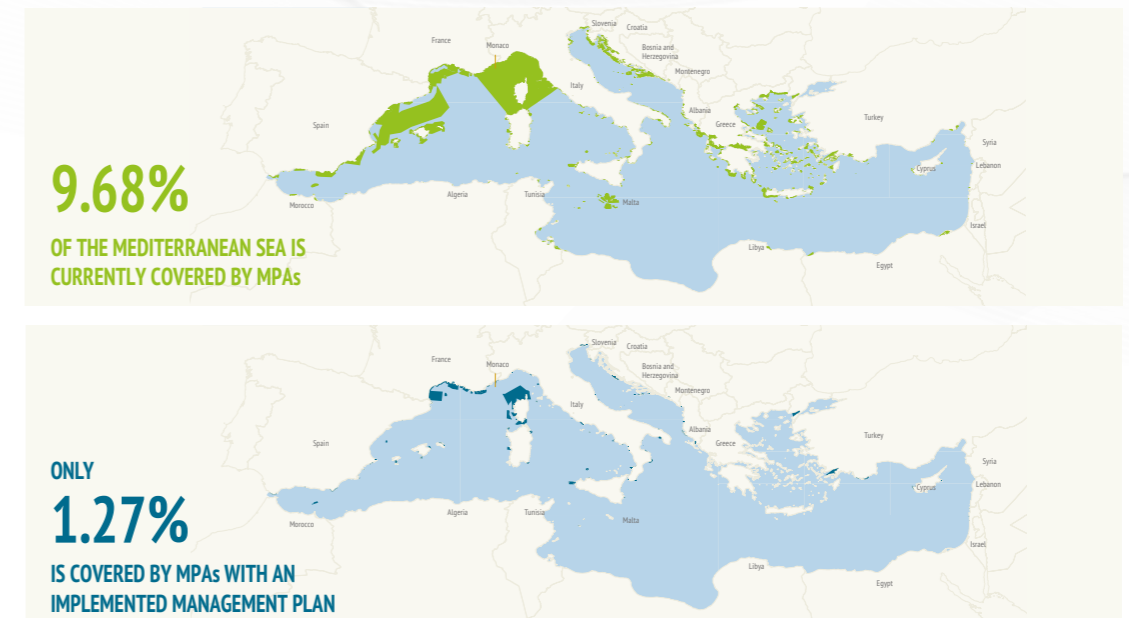


Figure 2: MPAs in the Mediterranean Basin vs. MPAs operating with a management plan (WWF MMI 2021).

Accepted as part of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, Aichi Biodiversity Targets form the global framework which covers the priority biodiversity actions and are agreed upon by contracting countries. The parties of CBD have accepted that "Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures" (OECM) are a component of the 11th of the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets defined in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and agreed upon the definition of "Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures" (OECM) along with the guiding principles, common features, and criteria for identifying OECMs in the 14th Conference of the Parties (CBD/COP/DEC/14/8).

According to the Convention on Biological Diversity decision, governments have committed to reaching the target of protecting at least 10% of each eco-region by 2010 and establishing ecologically representative MPA networks by 2012. Considering the challenges confronted by many countries in meeting this goal, the global target was reviewed and revised as follows in 2011:

**TARGET**  
11

"By 2020... 10% of coastal and marine areas... are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas... integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes."

Despite the increase in policies and actions to support biodiversity, indicators point to a worsening in the factors causing loss of biodiversity between 2011 and 2020, resulting in a further decrease in biodiversity. On a global level, none of the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets agreed upon by contracting parties in 2010 have been fully achieved yet.

Having replaced the previous target (namely, the protection of 17% of landscapes and 10% of seascapes by 2020), the 'CBD Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (CBD/GBF) is known as the "30 x 30" target. It aims to ensure the protection and conservation of at least 30 percent of the world's landscapes and seascapes through a well-connected and effective system of protected areas and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) by 2030, with a focus on areas that are of particular importance in terms of biological diversity and in a consistent manner with other existing international commitments including the 'Strategic Plan on Biodiversity.'

The nationally designated protected areas in Turkey are those ecosystems of natural, historical, cultural, scientific, and aesthetic significance that are either threatened or endangered; and landscapes and seascapes that cover rare, endemic species that are under protection by national legislation and international conventions to which we are a party, as well as globally endangered species and habitats. As there is no specific conservation status in effect concerning MPAs in Turkey, the legal and organizational structure of such areas are evaluated within the existing system of "protected areas."

Sustainable management of coastal and marine resources is essential for providing economic and social benefits and ecosystem services to humans. These natural heritage areas play an important role in the local culture as well. Effects of human-related pressures and climate change have a greater impact on communities and economies that depend on landscapes and seascapes. In efforts to reduce such effects and protect marine biological diversity, many countries have identified and declared MPAs.

Beyond protected areas, the globally increasing momentum towards the 30x30 movement has also accelerated the efforts implemented for the common goals of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Methods (OECMs), biodiversity conservation, and sustainable fishery management. Identifying successful approaches to enhance effective marine management is of great importance to enable the establishment of a commitment shared by all stakeholders towards the achievement of such ambitious global goals. Therefore, setting forth and promptly implementing important opportunities and ways of effective management to protect Turkey's seascapes will both enhance Turkey's reputation in national and international platforms and enable its marine biological diversity to flourish, ensuring a healthy future.

## 2. Purpose

The 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) will be held in the spring of 2022 as part of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity. A decision was made to prepare a policy paper on Turkey's seascapes in preparation for this conference. This paper was aimed at setting forth the efforts and needs associated with the use of proper means for the post-2020 conservation and effective management of marine biological diversity and ecosystems in Turkey based particularly on the knowledge and experience of relevant parties and stakeholders. The stakeholders meeting (Policy Dialogue) held in collaboration with GEF-SGP Turkey and with the financial support of the MAVA Foundation forms the basis of this policy paper. It is considered a significant step in terms of enabling progress towards efficient and active implementation plans through sustainable protection and utilization models and new governance approaches required by the value of Turkey's seas in the near future.

Planned as a platform to enable knowledge, experience, and opinion exchange among relevant stakeholders to identify priority goals that may assist in preparation of the Country Policy Paper and guide implementation, the 'Policy Dialogue for Post-2020 Seascapes in Turkey' meeting was held in Ankara between November 29 and 30, 2021. Organized and facilitated by the Proje Evi Cooperative, the Policy Dialogue was attended by almost 50 participants comprising non-governmental organizations, cooperatives, civil initiatives, fishers and fishery cooperatives, and other local representatives who had conducted or were still conducting efforts towards ensuring the protection of marine and coastal resources and biological diversity and/or establishment of effectively managed marine protected areas in Turkey, as well as the representatives of collaborating public institutions and organizations and academic institutions.

Among the most important factors in the preparation of the Policy Dialogue program were topics associated with the evaluation of Turkey's commitments focusing on marine and coastal protection as part of CBD, improving the existing state of marine resources, particularly of small-scale fisheries, and effectively managing and expanding marine and coastal protected areas.

This Policy Paper summarizes the opinions and suggestions developed as a result of the dialogue efforts conducted between November 29 and 30, 2021. It also reviews the findings of national, regional, and international efforts conducted in MPAs as required by the CBD commitments (i.e. UNEP/MAP 2021) and the important outcomes of the previously implemented projects such as the National Strategy of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas of Turkey (TVKGM 2014), and combines overlapping topics.

### Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures:

A geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in-situ conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values (CBD, Decision 14/8, 2018).

### 3. Conceptual Framework

As part of the Policy and Measures set forth under the topic of Protection of Environment in Turkey's Eleventh Development Plan (2019-2023), it is stated that "The amount of terrestrial and marine protected areas will be increased and in order to ensure effective management of these areas, practices such as forming green corridors, planning and infrastructure works will be carried out." Despite the momentum gained by the efforts towards developing a national MPA network for the conservation of marine biological diversity in recent years, the number and total coverage of these areas seem to be far from the quantitative goals set by international conventions or representing the entirety of our country's biological diversity.

With its three main biogeographical regions, namely European-Siberian, Mediterranean, and Iran-Turan, Turkey is surrounded on three sides by the Black, Aegean, and Mediterranean Seas. The Marmara Sea, which is an inland sea, is also located within its borders. Turkey has been generally declaring MPAs across the coastlines of the Mediterranean, Aegean, and Marmara since 1988. There are 27 MPAs spread across an area of approximately 29,812 km<sup>2</sup> in our country, hosting many key coastal and marine habitats such as islands, coastal dunes, sea caves, and coastal lagoons, as well as endangered plant and animal species that are protected under various statuses (Specially Protected Areas, National Parks, Natural Parks, etc.) and managed by different ministries. Additionally, there are areas that are designated as diving prohibited areas and no-fishing zones by legislation, as well as large coastal and marine areas where obligations and restrictions on when and how to catch aquaculture and the equipment to be used apply to ensure the protection of aquacultural resources.

Qualifying as protected areas with marine and coastal areas but lacking legal conservation status in Turkey, MPAs were initially introduced and utilized as a tool to restrict fishing. However, the benefits they enable for the conservation of biodiversity on the scale of fishing and ecosystems have become increasingly apparent over time. In the context of fisheries,

area-based closures may restrict fishing activities by imposing limits on certain kinds of equipment, seasons, or target species and be routinely used as part of fishery management. Therefore, these areas can be considered to be functioning as 'Other Effective Area-Based Measures' (OECMs). MPAs also play a significant role in minimizing the negative impacts of climate change by supporting ecosystem resilience through ecological mechanisms (Figure 3).

With its dual focus on both ecosystem health and human well-being, the seascape approach is a practical framework for implementing the principles of Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM) which is essential for achieving successful long-term marine conservation that also meets people's needs.

Turkey has certain liabilities for protecting, sustainably managing, and handing down marine environments and coastal areas to future generations as part of its national legislation, as well as other liabilities required by the provisions of international conventions to which it is a party. To meet these liabilities, it is essential to ensure that the Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) as well as endangered and threatened marine species are protected and conserved, and that marine areas are sustainably and successfully protected with a focus on ecosystem health and human well-being. This can only be achieved by adopting the "Seascape" approach and implementing effective policies on local, national, and regional scales.

Seascapes include scientifically and strategically defined multi-use marine areas where state institutions, private organizations, and other stakeholders collaborate to ensure the capacity and vision of the scale that is required to maintain sufficient management, protect the diversity and prosperity of marine habitats, and enhance human well-being.

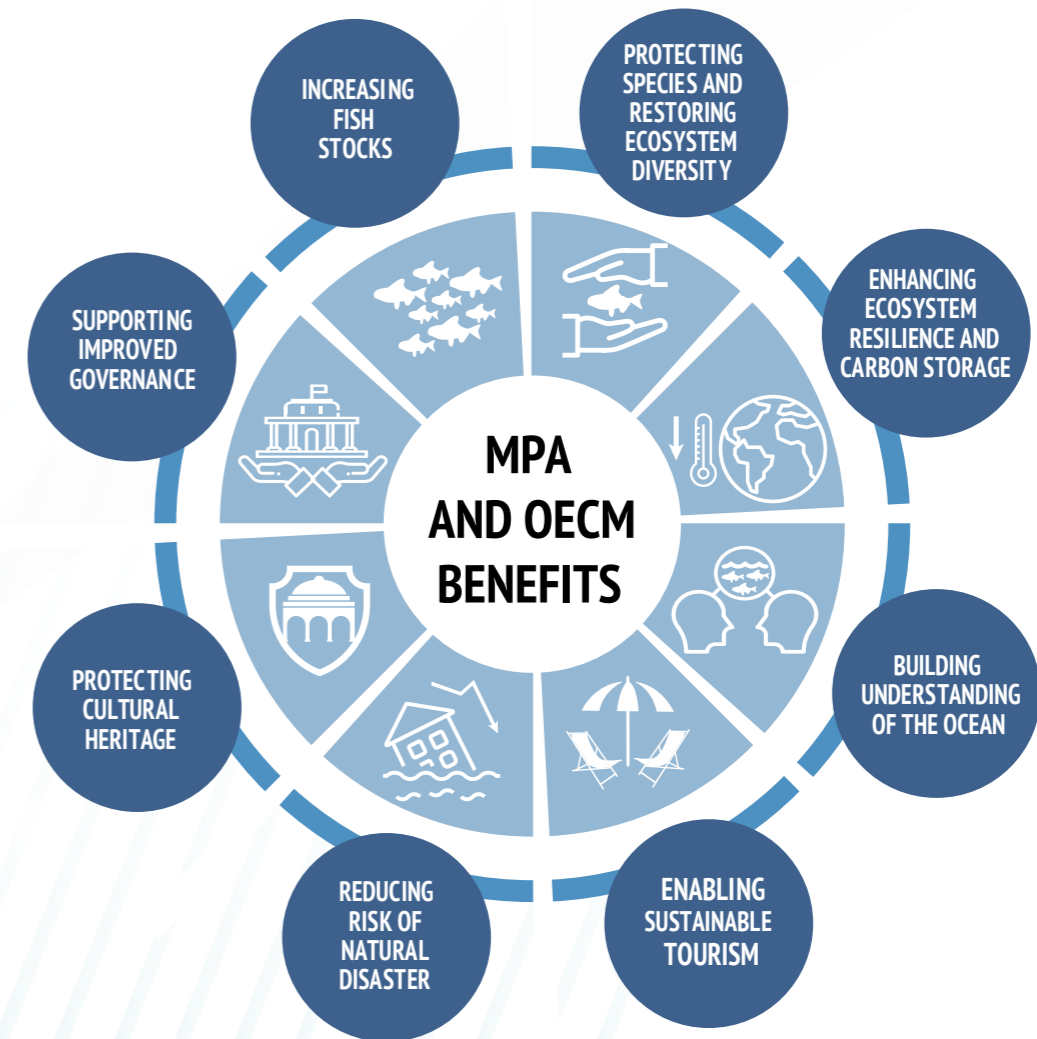


Figure 3: Benefits of MPAs and OECMs (Source: WWF MMI 2021)



It is required that political and financial institutions in Turkey adopt and support the Seascape approach to meet the national and international goals concerning the conservation of biological diversity. To provide a basis for the efforts to be implemented to this end, primary goals and activities associated with the following topics were examined as part of the 'Policy Dialogue for Post-2020 Seascapes in Turkey' program:

- The targets that have been met so far in Turkey as part of the provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity,
- The successful practices that have yielded positive conservation outcomes in seascapes (particularly in fisheries),
- The extent to which fishery systems with a low impact on natural resources such as small-scale artisanal fisheries are taken into account in the process of decision making,
- The areas that could be evaluated under potential 'Other Effective Area-Based Measures' (OECMs) in the marine and coastal areas of Turkey.

In addition, the concept of Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes (SEPLs) was included. SEPLs are defined as dynamic land and marine areas that have developed as a result of long-term interactions between nature and humans where ecosystem services are maintained through biological diversity, with benefits for human well-being (Doğa Derneği and Idea Universal Association 2021). The common features of the OECMs and SEPLs approaches that could be of use in the conservation of seas, marine environments and those parts of seas that are related to the land (deltas, wetlands, gulfs, waterways, etc.), as well as planning and conservation efforts to be implemented in such areas were set forth. There are many examples of SEPLs in Turkey where in-situ protection of biological diversity and ecosystem services is ensured and traditional production systems and ways of living are maintained. Therefore, these areas are suitable for consideration under the category of OECMs. The actions that will enable the sharing of this indigenous information need to be defined.

## 4. Dialogue planning, outline and scope

To ensure effective participation of all stakeholders in the Policy Dialogue, the desired outcomes to be achieved through the efforts were outlined in the preparation phase. Proje Evi Cooperative prepared the dialogue agenda in collaboration with SGP and the MAVA Foundation. Prepared to support the working groups of the dialogue with a fact sheet and relevant presentations, this agenda enabled effective exchange of knowledge and experience. Moreover, gender equality among the participants was paid strict attention to with a particular focus on ensuring that local views representing young and female fishers were featured. The presentations given on the first day of the program served as building blocks for the dialogue.

The basic outcomes of these presentations are of importance for the policies to be developed in the protection of Turkey's seascapes. In the opening speech of the dialogue, SGP Turkey National Coordinator Gökmen Argun highlighted the importance of the position to be adopted by Turkey as per CBD and the indigenous human-marine relations in Turkey's seascapes, mentioning the importance of civil actors working in reconciliation for the protection of these areas.

**"Turkey's seascapes and the biological diversity they host are of great importance not only for Turkey, but also for the entire Mediterranean and globally. The activities to be designed in collaboration in this meeting will reinforce the marine-human relations on all our seas."**

Güner Ergün from the Proje Evi Cooperative explained the history of MPAs in Turkey based on the previously conducted conservation efforts. He touched upon issues that could serve as a guide for opportunities associated with OECMs and examined the topic of the adaptation of practices that fall outside the conservation statuses that are currently in effect in Turkey.

**"As part of the 11th Aichi Target featured in the Convention on Biological Diversity, all relevant public institutions and organizations and stakeholders continue working at full speed to achieve the 30x30 target concerning coastal and marine areas. Also, an intensive effort is being conducted for the implementation of the roadmap devised as part of this convention."**

Esra Başak from the Proje Evi Cooperative gave a brief account of the draft "National Strategy of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas of Turkey (TVKGM 2014)" which was prepared in 2014. She pointed to the fact that the 5 goals and respective actions set under these still maintain their validity and that this is a significant contribution to this policy paper.

Based on the experience she had on the field while conducting research as part of her doctoral work, Dr. Ayşegül Çil from the Proje Evi Cooperative drew attention to the lessons learned so far on in this area and the topics that could be prioritized in the future. Based upon the example of the Bodrum Peninsula, she highlighted the necessity of socially, culturally, and anthropologically evaluating the efforts to be conducted in protected areas or areas that require protection. She also conveyed that solutions such as Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) have actually failed to effectively protect coastal and marine resources so far, but remained only as good reference information, documents, or reports.

**“Ensuring the coordination of all activities and powerful collaboration through a platform that has matured in terms of negotiation, communication, and equal partnership by all stakeholders for planned activities is essential for the protection of coastal resources.”**

With an emphasis on examples and practices that are still in use, Nature Culture Research Coordinator of Doğa Derneği, Raziye İçtepe remarked in her presentation that indigenous practices should be maintained by way of communicating the SEPLs approach which supports the protection of seascapes (Figure 4).

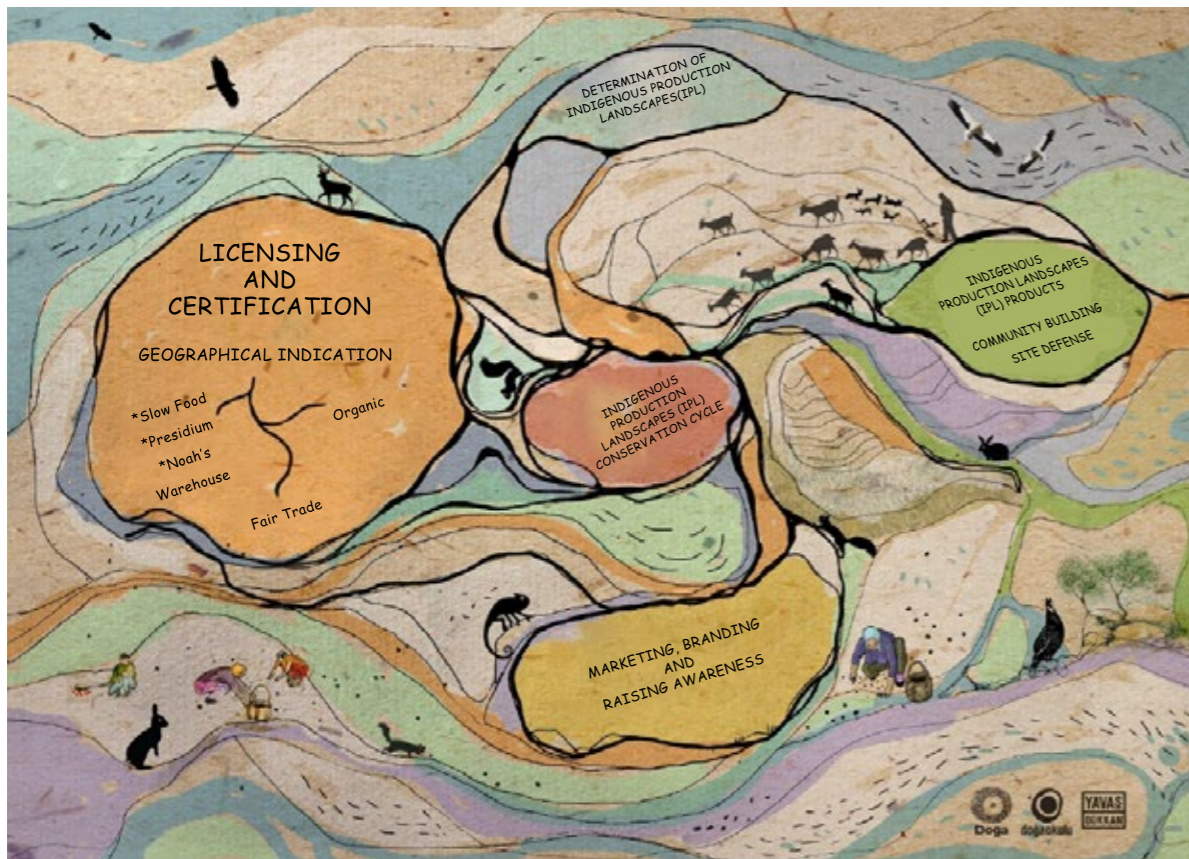


Figure 4: Indigenous production landscapes conservation cycle (Doga)

To inspire the working groups and future efforts, finalized or ongoing good practices and successful examples for the conservation of seascapes constituted another significant part of the dialogue.

In his presentation, Cem Orkun Kırac (Underwater Research Society - SAD) described the conservation and advocacy efforts implemented for Key Biodiversity Areas, the challenges encountered in these efforts, and the methods that could enhance the effectiveness of advocacy. 28 cases were studied on the Marmara, Aegean, and Mediterranean coasts, resulting in the documentation of habitat destruction in 19 areas. These studies demonstrate that the combination of on-site monitoring of marine and coastal habitat features and collaboration and solidarity with local communities ensure success.

Addressing whether special fisheries management could be adopted in Special Environmental Protected Areas, Ege University Faculty Member Prof. Dr. Vahdet Ünal evaluated the marine and coastal studies conducted in Gökova from 2009 on, particularly those which adopted the ecosystem-based fisheries management approach with respect to the evolutionary process up to 2020 (Vasconcellos and Ünal 2022).

The effective marine ranger systems implemented by the Mediterranean Conservation Society (AKD) and SÜRKOOP's (Turkish Central Union of Fisheries Cooperatives) efforts were also cited as pilot schemes. In his presentation, Vahit Alan (AKD) highlighted the lack of sanctions associated with marine ranger systems and that legislative regulations are highly needed. Pointing to the fact that such efforts are carried out by volunteers, Alan emphasized that the forming of a professional organization would significantly contribute to the activities of marine rangers and the monitoring of marine biological diversity (Figure 5).



Figure 5: Marine ranger efforts by the Mediterranean Conservation Society (AKD 2021)

Ayşe Oruç from WWF Turkey evaluated the protection goals set for 2030 on both the global and local scales and shared WWF's suggestions associated with the transformative and more ambitious strategic action plans towards the post-2020 protection of biological diversity in Turkey's Mediterranean basin.

## 5. Working groups, primary goals and actions

In parallel with the agenda, the participants of the dialogue meeting were divided into three groups to work on the main topics that were identified. In the light of the findings and facts arrived at through the policy dialogue stakeholders meeting, gaps and improvement areas were identified. The resulting tables (goals, activities, timing, responsible organizations, relevant stakeholders, and financial resources) aimed at supporting the goals and actions are presented below in detail.

### Goal 1. Inclusive Governance

Effective participation of stakeholders in both the decision-making processes and in the governance of marine and coastal areas was prioritized. The key governance strategies that were identified and the principles that would reinforce the legal and institutional framework to enable their implementation were also incorporated.

Ensuring that MPAs and areas of conservation priority are locally managed, developing 'No-Take Zones' and similar resource conservation methods (by taking into account regional variations), and ensuring their sustainability on local, regional, and national levels are of importance as well. Within this scope, practical actions were identified to ensure the establishment of ecological corridors in order to maintain the continuity of existing MPAs and their respective ecosystem services with broader basins, landscapes and seascapes they interact with and conducting research to enable data acquisition for a better understanding of the various ecological, social, and economic components of these areas and associated ecosystem service flows. Moreover, steps to be taken for possible actions and collaborations towards eliminating the pressures impacting the regions where MPAs and OECMs are located and how and by whom these actions would be carried out were also discussed (Table 1).

As part of this goal, the following actions were identified:

- Action 1.** Evaluating the effectiveness of existing MPAs
- Action 2.** Establishing a local platform consisting of public and civil initiatives / NGOs
- Action 3.** Lobbying through centralized administration
- Action 4.** Ensuring financial sustainability
- Action 5.** Establishing a committee for MPA management
- Action 6.** Completing missing data essential for planning
- Action 7.** Creating data management tools
- Action 8.** Enhancing capacity
- Action 9.** Creating a network of protected areas

Table 1. Suggested actions under “Inclusive Governance”

GOAL 1. Inclusive Governance					
Action	How	Who	When	Stakeholders	Resources
<b>A</b>					
<b>-Evaluating the effectiveness of existing MPAs</b>	-Indicators (Success factors) -Integration of national and local governance legislations	-Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change -Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	Short term	-Relevant public institutions -NGOs -Universities	- SGP, MAVA
<b>-Establishing a local platform consisting of public and civil initiatives / NGOs</b>	-Establishing protocols for collaboration -Active participation	-Local administrators -Local NGOs -Local initiatives	Short term	-All local stakeholders	-SGP
<b>-Lobbying through centralized administration</b>	-Establishing a national NGO network	-Central administration bodies -Leading actors	Medium term	-Central administration bodies -Leading actors -Local and national NGOs -Universities	
<b>-Ensuring financial sustainability</b>	-Budget formation	-Relevant public institutions (Central administration)	Medium term	-Public institutions -Local administrations	-Public budget -International funds
<b>B</b>					
<b>-Establishing a committee for MPA management</b>	-Regulating legislation	-Decision-makers of relevant institutions and organizations	Medium term	- Decision-makers of relevant institutions and organizations -All local stakeholders	

<b>C</b>					
<b>-Completing missing data essential for planning</b>	-Identifying gaps through literature review	-Relevant ministries	Medium term	-Relevant ministry departments -MPA Committee	- SGP, MAVA
<b>-Creating data management tools</b>	-Establishing a database -Establishing protocols for data acquisition, access, and benefit sharing	-Relevant ministries	Medium term	-Relevant ministry departments -MPA Committee	
<b>-Increasing capacity</b>	-Organizing training programs	-Relevant ministries	Medium term	- Relevant ministry departments -Local MPA Committee	-Public budget -International funds
<b>D</b>					
<b>-Creating a network of protected areas</b>	-Conducting ecological and socio-economic research -Scenario-based modelling of the pressures from inside and outside the areas -Valuation of ecosystem services in MPAs	-Relevant ministries	Medium term	-Relevant ministry departments -NGOs -Universities	-Public budget -International funding agencies

## Goal 2. Establishing New Protected Areas and Expanding the Coverage of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas

Once the species and habitats that require the establishment of new protected areas are identified, the selection of potential areas with the appropriate marine and coastal zones will help enhance awareness on OECMs. Thus, guidance for the application of OECM criteria will be enabled. The possibility of collaborating with other industries following the identification of OECMs that may contribute to the structure and connection of a system of protected areas with marine and coastal areas as part of this goal was also discussed. Moreover, it was pointed out that support for activities ensuring the maintenance of social and cultural practices that enable sustainable resource management in potential regions characterizing as OECMs is called for (Table 2).

As part of this goal, the following actions were identified:

**Action 1.** Prioritizing areas where integrated planning with freshwater ecosystems (including river basins and wetlands) can be done

**Action 2.** Enhancing awareness on OECMs and providing guidance for the application of OECM criteria

**Action 3.** Drawing up an inventory of potential OECMs that meet the criteria

**Action 4.** Ensuring the monitorability and manageability of OECM areas

Table 2. Suggested actions under "Establishing New Protected Areas and Expanding the Coverage of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas"

GOAL 2. Establishing New Protected Areas and Expanding the Coverage of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas					
Action	How	Who	When	Stakeholders	Resources
- Prioritizing areas where integrated planning with freshwater ecosystems (including river basins and wetlands) can be done	-Creating legislation compatible with the principles of Water Framework Directive and Marine Strategy Framework Directive (Reviewing and improving relevant legislation and making up for gaps)	-Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry -Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change -Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure	By 2030	-NGOs -Fisheries -Agriculture and Fishery Cooperatives -Local administrations -Industrial enterprises -Chambers of commerce -Tourism professionals -Universities (Academicians) -Local communities	- National and international funding agencies -Local administrations -Chambers of industry
	- Integration of national and local governance legislations	-Ministry of Culture and Tourism			

-Enhancing awareness on OECMs and providing guidance for the application of OECM criteria	-Effective use of local and national media -Visits -Festivals -Training programs for target groups	-NGOs -Local administrations -Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry -Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change -Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure -Ministry of Culture and Tourism -Ministry of National Education -Universities	Within 5 years	-NGOs -Local administrations -Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry -Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change -Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure -Ministry of Culture and Tourism -Universities	- National and international funding agencies -Local administrations -Chambers of industry
-Drawing up an inventory of potential OECMs that meet the criteria	-Mapping existing fisheries restricted zones (GIS) -Identifying zones that are restricted for construction based on city zoning plans -Identifying No Hunting zones on islands and coastal areas as per the decisions of the Central Hunting Commission -Identifying areas allocated to aquaculture production -Identifying geographical grey zones (Aegean Sea)	-Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change	Within 2 years	-NGOs -Local administrations -Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry -Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change -Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure -Ministry of Culture and Tourism -Ministry of National Defense -Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources	-National and international funding agencies

Table 3. Suggested actions under “Effective Management of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas”

				-Universities	
<b>-Ensuring the monitorability and manageability of OECM areas</b>	-Classifying and selecting areas identified through inventories -Developing legislation for institutions that use the areas to take the responsibility of monitoring and management -Transferring monitoring data to the relevant database	-Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change	Within the 3 years following the completion of inventories	-NGOs -Local administrations -Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry -Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change -Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure -Ministry of Culture and Tourism -Ministry of National Defense -Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources -Universities	Public budget

### Goal 3. Effective Management of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas

To ensure effective management of all MPAs and potential OECMs and implement relevant conservation and monitoring efforts based on management plans, Business Plans should be prepared. Adequate funding should be allocated to periodic management plan reviews. Enhancing individual and institutional capacity is essential for ensuring more effective MPA management and the management integration of the scientific data to be collected to this end. As part of this goal, monitoring of conservation outcomes, reinforcing management effectiveness through shared management and participatory processes, the inclusion of local stakeholders into all phases of the process, as well as their responsibilities were given prominence (Table 3).

As part of this goal, the following actions were identified:

**Action 1.** Management plans: setting clear and applicable goals

**Action 2.** Capacity building & improvement: enhancing surveillance capacity, creating legal basis, studies on species and habitats

**Action 3.** Resource management: financial and human resources, independent income model, in-kind contributions by decision-makers and public institutions

GOAL 3. Effective Management of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas					
Action	How	Who	When	Stakeholders	Resources
<b>A</b>					
<b>-Management plans: setting clear and applicable goals for conservation</b>	-Training and awareness programs (Why is conservation required?) -On-site application, illustration, efforts conducted (i.e. Foça) -Enhancing inclusive participation in the implementation of existing management plans	-Local communities -NGOs -Public institutions and universities -Council (Relevant public institutions, non-governmental organizations, aquaculture cooperatives, female fishers) -Local administration unit -Academicians -Marine conservation dialogue	Short term (Forming a council, training and awareness efforts, analysis and evaluation of existing management plans, bringing stakeholders together through a festival)	-Relevant public institutions -NGOs -Universities -Council members -Young/ Female fishers -All local stakeholders	- SGP, MAVA -National and international funding agencies - Cooperatives (Human resource)
<b>B</b>					
<b>-Capacity building and improvement: enhancing surveillance capacity, creating legal basis, studies on species and habitats</b>	-Training and awareness efforts -Capacity building (Human resources) -Effective management, analysis and evaluation of existing management plans -Monitoring and evaluation	-Decision makers of relevant organizations and institutions (legal basis) -Council (relevant public institutions, non-governmental organizations, aquaculture cooperatives, female/young fishers)	Short term -Lobby activities (Identifying institutions and teams, launch, monitoring and evaluation of marine habitats, effects of threatened species (Red List)	-Decision makers of relevant organizations and institutions -All local stakeholders -NGOs	-Public budget (In-kind contributions, human resource) -Municipalities (Marine ranger system) -SGP, MAVA

	-Training in the context of animal rights -Establishing a council -Forming public opinion -Allocating 5% of fines to area needs -Regulating legislations	- Local administration unit			
<b>C</b>					
<b>-Resource management: Financial and human resources, independent income model, in-kind contributions by decision makers and public institutions</b>	-Establishing sustainable financial capacity and mechanism -Lobbying	-Relevant public institution	Short term (Lobby activities, field interviews, fundraising efforts)	-Relevant public institutions	Public budget (In-kind contributions, human resource)

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The Policy Dialogue on the Post-2020 Seascapes in Turkey has enabled the identification of topics that will enable significant steps towards CBD. At the international level, the decisions made in the 22nd Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP 22 Antalya) of the Convention for the Protection of Marine Environment and Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (the Barcelona Convention) and its Protocols include a Post-2020 Regional Strategy for MPAs and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures in the Mediterranean” (UNEP/ MAP 2021). In correspondence with the current Policy Dialogue conducted for Turkey, the Post-2020 Regional MPA and OECM Strategy sets forth the core actions for expanding conservation coverage including the designation and reporting of ‘Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures’ (OECM). Suggested actions also call for the improvement of the management within MPAs, enhancing their management effectiveness and inclusion of governments and other stakeholders to ensure the success of MPAs.

Additionally, the fact that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) declared 2022 as the “International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture” is inclusive of all the topics that were addressed at the Policy Dialogue meeting. In the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture, all UN and FAO parties highlight the below building blocks of small-scale fishery systems in the Global Action Plan (FAO 2021):<sup>2</sup>

- 1.** Environmental Sustainability: Use biodiversity sustainably for the longevity of small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture
- 2.** Economic Sustainability: Support inclusive value chains for small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture
- 3.** Social Sustainability: Secure social inclusion and well-being of small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture
- 4.** Governance: Ensure effective participation of small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture in building and strengthening enabling policy environments
- 5.** Gender equality and equity: Acknowledge that women and men in small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture are equals
- 6.** Food security and nutrition: Promote the contribution to healthy diets from small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture in sustainable food systems
- 7.** Resilience: Increase the preparedness and adaptive capacity of small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture to environmental degradation, shocks, disasters and climate change.

The stakeholders of the Policy Dialogue for Post-2020 Seascapes in Turkey underlined the continuously increasing impacts of the pressures on Turkey’s seas and coasts and their natural resources. It was remarked that intensive effort is required in the short- and medium-term to meet the priority goals identified by the participants, the planning and project development phases for the suggested actions should be carried out with the contributions of relevant parties and stakeholders, and the conservation of seascapes in Turkey should be maintained at a fast pace through powerful and effective ways of management

Below are the highlights of the conclusions and recommendations concerning the achievement of the goals and actions offered under three headings as a result of the Policy Dialogue on Post-2020 Seascapes in Turkey. Many of these recommendations directly reflect the strategic goals addressed in the draft 'National Strategy of Marine and Protected Areas of Turkey' which was prepared as part of the Strengthening the System of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas of Turkey Project in 2014, but could not be operationalized.

- 1.** Developing the national legal framework and regulations for the identification, registration, and management of MPAs including Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs),
- 2.** Maximizing synergy and information exchange to increase the number and coverage of MPAs including No-Take Zones and ensure their monitorability and manageability,
- 3.** Ensuring full support of relevant organizations, institutions, and stakeholders to conserve biodiversity and enable sustainable management of natural resources through well-connected and efficient MPA systems and OECMs,
- 4.** Strengthening the structure and capacity of relevant conservation institutions for the management of MPAs and OECMs,
- 5.** Strengthening network-based collaboration and cooperation among public institutions, organizations, and civil initiatives in the management of MPAs and OECMs,
- 6.** Enhancing the communication, understanding, awareness, and knowledge of policy-makers, decision-makers, and stakeholders about MPAs and OECMs,
- 7.** Identifying and drawing up an inventory of potential OECMs (MPAs), and reporting them to national and regional databases,
- 8.** Ensuring that by 2030, at least 30 percent of lands, inland waters, and coastal and marine areas are conserved through integrated, efficiently and equitably managed, ecologically representative and connected ecological networks of protected areas and Other Effective Area-Based Measures (OECMs),
- 9.** Devising a detailed site-specific Management Plan and financial plan for each MPA including ecosystem-based fisheries management and developing and reinforcing adaptable planning and management frameworks,
- 10.** Fulfilling spatial data requirements of coastal and marine environments to enable data management,
- 11.** Ensuring that specific management plans devised for MPAs are integrated with spatial plans,
- 12.** Conducting financial projections of MPAs operating without a Management Plan and developing sustainable financing mechanisms,
- 13.** Taking the necessary steps for accounting the contributions of MPAs and OECMs to Sustainable Development Goals, blue economy, mitigation and adaptation to climate change effects.

In many respects, the recommendations featured in this Policy Paper developed for Turkey are in accord with the national and regional strategies that are indispensable for the conservation of marine ecosystems and the marine biological diversity they host. In the light of these recommendations, it is imperative to conserve marine and coastal areas immediately, as of 2022, through new models, strategies, projects, and programs and an effective management at local level by implementing the priority goals addressed in this Policy Paper. Throughout the dialogue, the parties to take part in the implementation of these actions demonstrated that they possess the ability to exchange information and utilize their experiences at the highest level. Based on successful on the ground implementations where the stakeholders (participants) use their local, regional, national, and international experiences and capacities, local empowerment should be ensured and systematic steps should be taken towards clear goals that will make a greater impact on national and international platforms for Turkey's marine and coastal areas by adopting a sustainable management approach.

<sup>2</sup> FAO's International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022 Global Action Plan has been translated into Turkish by the Proje Evi Cooperative as part of the Policy Dialogue.



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