Turkish Marine Research Foundation Activity Report

Achievements & Highlights
2019 Turkish Marine Research Foundation Activity Report

CONTENTS

Marine Key Habitats & Non-Indigenous Species Symposia, Antalya, 14-18 January 2019 ............................................ 4
ACCObAMS Cetacean Conservation Module, İstanbul, 18-21 Mart 2019 .................................................................. 5
CenoBS Project CETACEAN Aerial Survey, Black Sea, 4 July 2019 ................................................................. 6
Marmara Sea Cetacean Survey, Marmara Sea, 12-17 July 2019 ........................................................................... 7
Plastic Cleanup With Various Organizations ............................................................................................................ 8
Let’s Discover the Turkish Seas, New York, 18-23 August 2019 .............................................................................. 8
Climate Change Adaptation for the Sea and Coasts of Antalya” Project, Antalya, 15 September 2019 .......... 10
Prof. Keith Brander and Climate Change, İstanbul, 23 September 2019 .............................................................. 11
Aktaş Lake Workshop and Çıldır Panel Discussion, Ardahan, 27-28 September 2019 ................................. 12
ANEMONE Black Sea Joint Cruise, Black Sea, 1-4 October 2019 ................................................................. 13
ANEMONE Western Black Sea cetacean survey, Black Sea, 7-16 October 2019 ............................................... 13
ACCObAMS 7th Meeting of the Parties, İstanbul, 5-8 November 2019 ................................................................. 14
İstanbul Chamber of Shipping Council Presentation, İstanbul, 7 November 2019 ........................................... 15
Addressing Invasive Alien Species Threats at Key Marine Biodiversity Areas Project Committee, training & Legislative Arrangements Workshop, Ankara, 26-27 NoveMber, 2019 ................................................................. 16
ANEMONE Project Cetacean Workshop, İstanbul, 2 December 2019 ............................................................ 17
2019 Beykoz Symposium, İstanbul, 6-8 December 2019 .................................................................................. 17
World Marine Mammal Conference, Barcelona, 9-12 December 2019 .......................................................... 18
National Workshop on Marine Cave Habitats, İstanbul, 13 December 2019 .................................................... 19
Mediterranean, how generous you are ...................................................................................................................... 21
22. Year Stamp ...................................................................................................................................................... 21
Geographical Naming Studies .............................................................................................................................. 21
Videos ........................................................................................................................................................................ 22
Publications ............................................................................................................................................................ 26
Thanks ...................................................................................................................................................................... 29
OUR SEAS STILL POSSESS THE RICHNESS

THAT WE NEED TO PROTECT

The time has already come to protect what is left. We shouldn’t do the same mistakes again. First, we need to find the answer to questions like what we lost, why and how we lost them. For this purpose, we conduct studies and we will continue to do so. Among our coasts are ones with untouched natural beauties. Millions of organisms come to the coastal areas to feed and to reproduce. Lagoons and the mouth of streams possess rich amounts of nutrition for marine organisms. Even if we can’t see it right away, the sand we step on is full with life. Fish migrations continue in our straits. We can come across seals in the Mediterranean Sea. Even more, we have otters. Dolphins greet us from the boundless blue sea. When we look under the sea, we can see unbelievable beauties of life. Sea grasses host various organisms. Anchovy is still caught by fishermen in the Black Sea. Groupers, morays, octopus are the interesting guards of rock caves of the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas. But they all depend on our determination: We either decide to study and protect our seas or all of these riches will continue to decline.

We are well aware of dangers for the seas of Turkey and the surrounding areas. Overfishing, nonpoint source pollution, invasive species, climate change and the acidification of oceans. We can take precautions against these threats only through science and knowledge. We can ensure protection, conservation and balance through information and knowledge – in other words, through sustainability. That’s why, we care very deeply about the oceans and seas component of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
TARGETS OF TURKISH MARINE RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Data bank Formation

Obtaining necessary information is difficult due to the wide range of studies in our seas. For this reason, TUDAV created a data bank for the purpose of information exchange. ‘Accidents in the Turkish Straits and Black Sea Bibliography’ have been prepared by our foundation.

Research

TUDAV supports various studies, especially studies on biodiversity, either with its own resources or by getting in contact with related foundations. With regards to this concept, there is a long term study going on Turkish Straits.

Publications

Researches are presented to the scientific world both in Turkish and in English. Moreover, guide books are also prepared with the aim of increasing public awareness.

Education

For our foundation, it is very important to spread the knowledge of our seas to every part of the society. Seminars and conservation measures, especially for fishermen and other members of society, are being prepared and presented for this purpose.

Special Protected Areas

Our efforts concerning the establishment of special protected areas continue. Researches and practical applications will be conducted and we will help the general public come in contact with life underwater.
From 14th to 18th of January, 2019, Scientists and researchers from all over the Mediterranean region have met in Antalya for knowledge exchange on conservation of marine biodiversity and to ensure enhanced cooperation for achieving improved environmental conditions in the Mediterranean Sea. The symposia, financed by the MAVA Foundation and the Mediterranean Trust Fund was organized by the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC), the Mediterranean biodiversity center of MAP in collaboration with the Turkish Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, and the Turkish Marine Research Foundation (TUDAV).

The symposia provided an opportunity to exchange the most recent scientific data on marine biodiversity conservation while promoting cooperation between specialists working on the Mediterranean.
ACCOBAMS CETACEAN CONSERVATION MODULE, İSTANBUL, 18-21 MARCH 2019

The ACCOBAMS Cetacean Conservation Module in the Black Sea was conducted with logistical aid from our foundation.

The course on cetacean conservation by a panel of international cetacean experts, was organized jointly by ACCOBAMS and Istanbul University Faculty of Aquatic Sciences on 18-21 March 2019. Postgraduate students from many universities in Turkey, as well as those from countries in the Black Sea region have come together to learn about whale and dolphin species, anatomy, physiology, pathology, study techniques, threats and conservation.

VETANKA 2019 MEETING, ANKARA, 20-22 MARCH 2019

Veterinary doctor Erdem Danyer has made a presentation on our cetacean-related work at the Vet ANKA Meeting that took place between 20-22 March, 2019.
After 3 weeks and over 7,000 km, the biggest survey of Black Sea dolphins has ended. 1750 records dolphins were collected during the Survey that aimed to collect scientific data about the distribution and number of dolphin and porpoise populations in Black Sea. The Survey took place in 5 countries: Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Turkey and Georgia. The survey was carried out by the CeNoBS Project which has started in January 2019 and jointly funded by EU.
After 5 days and 600 km surveyed, the research expedition on cetaceans in the Marmara Sea has come to an end. Conducted with the purpose of obtaining accurate information about the distribution of dolphin populations in the Marmara Sea, each survey resulted in the sighting of 1 to 18 individuals. Preliminary results of the TUDAV-funded expedition are: 38 sightings of dolphin and porpoise.
PLASTIC CLEANUP WITH VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Our foundation has organized garbage cleanup campaigns on special days like World Environment Day, World Ocean Day and World Cleanup Day with various organizations. After having been gathered, the garbage was handed down to municipal authorities for recycling. With a long standing interest in the disposal of plastics, our foundation continues to organize events for raising awareness.

LET’S DISCOVER THE TURKISH SEAS, NEW YORK, 18-23 AUGUST 2019

The Turkish Marine Research Foundation (TUDAV) was proud to organize a photo exhibition entitled “Let’s Discover the Turkish Seas” at the UN Headquarters, NYC, on 19-23 August 2019, under the auspices of the Permanent Mission of Turkey. While depicting different aspects of the Turkish seas, the exhibition coincides with the “Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction”.

8
The exhibition, consisting of 32 photos taken by famous underwater photographers and talented volunteers, depicts the rich biodiversity and unique characteristics of Turkish coastlines and seas. The opening speech was conducted by ambassador and permanent UN representative Feridun Sinirlioğlu and by our president, Prof. Dr. Bayram Öztürk. While the ambassador mentioned the deleterious effects of climate change and pollution on marine ecosystems, our president spoke about the importance of international cooperation in relation to Turkey's unique geographic location and its role in conserving biodiversity in the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Photographs at the exhibition included the sperm whale rescued in 2002 in Fethiye, marine life affected by climate change, endangered sharks, seagrass beds and groupers under the threat of extinction. Other subjects included fish farms, aquaculture and fisherwomen as well as migratory species such as blue fin tuna and sea turtles. Also sharing the stories of escalating plastic pollution and scientific efforts of TÜDAV to protect our seas, the exhibition was announced at the official UN Journal and held everyone’s interest until the last day.
We have completed our joint project with the Antalya Metropolitan Municipality, the "Climate Change Adaptation for the Sea and Coasts of Antalya" European Union Project. It took place in Antalya, strong in economy, rich in culture and biodiversity, and with a 657 km coastline in the most vulnerable Mediterranean basin. The project concluded on 15th of September 2019, after two marine surveys and several meetings and reports. The survey encompassing the Kalkan region was carried out between the 24th and 30th of May, 2019. In the area between Kaş and Kalkan, 18 breeding pairs of Audouin’s Gull (Larus audouinii) and 2 pairs of Peregrine Falcon (Falco peregrinus) were observed. Sıçan Island was found to be the breeding place for 450 pairs of Caspian Gull (Larus cachinnas). We hope this project becomes an example for other municipalities. As a nation, projects like these will take us further in our battle with climate change.
Nobel prize winner Keith Brander, a precious guest of our foundation, has given a speech on climate change and its effects, and marine habitats during a cocktail at the Moda Deniz Külübü.
Aktaş Lake Workshop and Çıldır Panel Discussion was organized by the Ardahan Governorate, Ardahan University, Serhat Development Agency and Turkish Marine Research Foundation on the 27th and 28th of September 2019. Many academicians, bureaucrats, related officials and cooperative presidents have attended. Subjects included an ecologic evaluation of the lake, development of fisheries, biodiversity, birds, ecotourism, management plans, fisheries model and cooperatives, climate records and the lake’s evolutionary process. Georgian officials attending the workshop have talked about the region of the lake in their own country in terms of the lake’s current situation, protection protocols and the importance of protected areas. At the end of the workshop, responsibilities and duties of both countries were discussed and noted. This workshop is intended to result in a book. During the discussion panel, the lake's geomorphological structure, biodiversity, water quality, sustainability, protection and conservation was discussed. We thank Ardahan governor Mr. Mustafa MASATLI for organizing the workshop.
ANEMONE BLACK SEA JOINT CRUISE, BLACK SEA, 1-4 OCTOBER 2019

“Assessing the vulnerability of the Black Sea marine ecosystem to human pressures” (Anemone) project has completed one of its core activities, the Black Sea Joint Scientific Cruise. A team of 17 marine scientists from 4 countries (Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine) on board the research vessel “Mare Nigrum” acquired samples from water, sediments and marine organisms to assess the ecological health of Black Sea. Marine mammals, birds and floating litter observations were made by TUDAV and Ong Mare Nostrum.

ANEMONE WESTERN BLACK SEA CETACEAN SURVEY, BLACK SEA, 7-16 OCTOBER 2019

“Assessing the vulnerability of the Black Sea marine ecosystem to human pressures” (Anemone) project has conducted a cetacean survey of the western coasts of Black Sea with its 7-member crew. Covering 600 km in 8 days, the research expedition surveyed cetaceans in the western Black Sea coast of Turkey between Bulgarian border İğneada to Karadeniz Ereğli. Funded by the ANEMONE project, the expedition was conducted to obtain accurate scientific data on the abundance and distribution of cetaceans in the Black Sea. We also collected data on floating marine litter to get a better understanding about the human pressures on cetaceans. 16 harbor porpoises (2 trips), 113 bottlenose dolphins (28 trips) and 114 common dolphins (28 trips) were observed. Analyses are underway.
7th Meeting of ACCOBAMS was held in Istanbul, Turkey from 5th to 8th of November, 2019. With contributions from 24 countries and one week of intense discussions, effective measures for cetacean conservation and habitat protection were adopted. During the pre-event, we have presented the preliminary results of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative (#ASI) in Mediterranean and Black Sea. Our new book summarizing our cetacean studies was presented in a side event on the second day.
Our president Prof. Bayram Öztürk has given a presentation detailing the activities of TÜDAV at the Chamber of Shipping council on 7 November 2019. The popular speech is available on youtube.
The workshop, headed by the General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks, took place in Ankara on 26-27 November, 2019. During the workshop, TUDAV president Prof. Dr. Bayram Öztürk has presented his findings and suggestions on legislative arrangements. Additionally, board member academic Dr. Selin Gamze Sumen has made a presentation focused on invasive species’ impact on human health. Our foundation has also advised on legislative arrangements concerning the importance of government consultants in health-related matters.
Within the scope of the Project “Assessing the vulnerability of the Black Sea marine ecosystem to human pressures – ANEMONE”, we carried out our Cetacean Workshop on 2nd of December in İstanbul. During the workshop, information and training was provided about cetaceans and stranding. We also discussed what should be done in case of stranding and how we can improve the stranding network in the Turkish Black Sea coast.

Beykoz, with a history going back centuries, has entered an era of development and industrialization in the 19th century. Organized by the Beykoz city hall between 6th and 8th of December 2019, this most recent Beykoz Symposium has looked at the economic, demographic and political development of Beykoz as well as environmental problems brought on by its unique position in history and geography. Culture, literature, sports, community life, industrialization and immigration were amongst the subjects included in the symposium.

In our presentations, we, as TÜDAV, have talked about the importance of marine activities in Beykoz and the importance fisheries, marine transportation and shipping as well as marine and coastal tourism. Overfishing, ghost fishing, noise contamination, invasive species, oil spills and marine pollution were some of the problems included in our speech. Climate change and loss of biodiversity were also mentioned.
The annual conference of the European Cetacean Society (ECS) and the biannual Marine Mammal Conference prepared by the Society for Marine Mammalogy (SMM) converged into World Marine Mammal Conference in Barcelona, Spain and conducted from 9th to 12th of December 2019.

We had 5 poster presentations in Barcelona for the World Marine Mammal Conference. The conference had 45 workshops, more than 600 presentations and over a thousand poster presentations with more than 2600 participants.
On December 13, 2019, we have successfully held our first National Workshop on the Marine Cave Habitats in Turkey. With 30 experts from various fields such as scientists, technical divers and diving instructors, representatives from non-profit organizations, government and UNEP/MAP, we have formed the first draft of an action plan that will fill the gaps in our knowledge concerning marine caves in Turkey, help better protect them and connect with the relevant government bodies about the issue. Resolutions adopted during the meeting include the creation of a comprehensive marine cave inventory in Turkey, raising public awareness, forming a new generation of technical divers for cave research, placing more importance on health and safety and protecting marine caves from human pressure such as fishermen and recreational divers.
2nd National Symposium on Monitoring and Evaluation of Seas was held on 11-13 December 2019, in Ankara. As TUDAV, we have summarized our cetacean monitoring activities and early Aegean Sea oceanographic studies in our presentations while contributing to the symposium with a 15-photograph exhibition titled "Let's Discover Turkish Seas". The symposium was attended by representatives from more than 50 universities.
MEDITERRANEAN, HOW GENEROUS YOU ARE

The song, “Mediterranean, How Generous You Are” (Çok Cömertsin Akdeniz), written by our foundation and composed by Mr. Musa Göçmen is available on youtube.

22. YEAR STAMP

TÜDAV has had a stamp printed for its 22nd year anniversary.

GEOGRAPHICAL NAMING STUDIES

Our foundation has applied to the geographical naming committee under the Ministry of Interior to have areas from the surrounding seas properly named, and made some suggestions. We will continue to our efforts in 2020.
VIDEOS

Current System Modelling of Turkish Seas (TUDAV)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6jpyN0xyxCk

Current System Modelling of Turkish Seas is being shared on youtube in video format.

A Short Movie on IUU Fishing by TUDAV

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=toCk7OsBH_M

A short movie on illegal fishing can be found on youtube.
Let's Discover Turkish Seas Photo Exhibition at United Nations

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lw6p8OotIeg

The opening speech from the photo exhibition at the United Nations headquarters can be found on youtube.

TÜDAV 2019 Marmara ve Batı Karadeniz Setase Sörveyleri

Our foundation prepared a short movie from the marine surveys conducted in 2019.
**Monk Seals of Gökçeada**

With the support of our foundation, a short movie on the Mediterranean Monk Seals of Gökçeada by the İstanbul University, Faculty of Aquatic Sciences.

![](image1.png)

**Our Seas and Climate Change**

The short video “Our Seas and Climate Change”, produced within the “Climate Change Adaptation for the Sea and Coasts of Antalya” EU Project, can be found online.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0DyM2cgHuDc&t=32s
Migration in Burning Seas

TÜDAV was a consultant for the TRT documentary about invasive species.

2019 Maritime and Cabotage Day Manifest

Our foundation has prepared a manifest for 2019 Cabotage Day, available on our facebook page.
Governance and Protection of the High Seas Beyond National Jurisdiction

Governance and Protection of the High Seas Beyond National Jurisdiction published by our foundation touches on an important subject. Told by experts from various fields, the book looks at the fair management and reasons for conservation of high seas covering more than 50% of the world. Legal approaches, genetic data, fisheries resources and marine protected areas are amongst the subjects covered in the book. This book, published in 2019, is 126 pages long and in Turkish.
Editors; Nesrin ALGAN, Onur GÖNÜLAL

Diving Medicine for Instructors

“Diving Medicine for Instructors” (Eğitmenler İçin Dalış Sağlığı) is intended to be a useful scuba diving aid for the instructors. Published by our foundation, this book includes subjects on diving disorders, diagnostic approaches and onsite medical assistance. Prepared by expert academic doctors from various health-care facilities, this 18 part, 264-page book was published with the help of Turkish Underwater Sports Federation (TSSF).
Editor; Şamil AKTAŞ
“Cetacean Studies in Turkey by TUDAV”, published by our foundation, includes a list of studies on whales and dolphins conducted by our foundation since 1993 as well as the ACCOBAMS process. The 50-page book, published in 2019, is in English.

Editors:
Ayaka AMAHA ÖZTÜRK
Arda M. TONAY

“Marine Caves of the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. Biodiversity, Threats and Conservation”, consisting of 18 articles and published by our foundation, includes subjects ranging from geomorphological studies, biodiversity and conservation of dark habitats to cave diving and legal approaches. Prepared with the contributions of 43 scientists from diverse backgrounds, this 258-page book can be found in English.

Editor; Bayram ÖZTÜRK
“Climate Change Adaptation for the Sea and Coasts of Antalya” EU Project, “Climate Change and Our Seas” Festival Book

This 160-page book includes essays, poems, photographs and artwork acquired for the festival, and information on activities performed within the scope of the project.
We thank everyone who contributed to our foundation in 2019, most of all, to our workers, partners, consultants, founders and board members. Board members who passed away in 2019 will be remembered fondly. Please do continue to support us and help protect our seas. More information is available at www.tudav.org

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