

PRESS RELEASE

BLACK SEA COUNTRIES UNITE FOR ACTION AMID REGIONAL CHALLENGES

Within the scope of the Black Sea Action Day on October 31, coastal countries of the Black Sea came together to strengthen regional cooperation and address shared environmental challenges. The online event, organized by the Turkish Marine Research Foundation (TUDAV), brought together more than 60 participants.

The opening speech was delivered by Prof. Dr. Bayram Öztürk, President of TUDAV. In his remarks, Prof. Dr. Öztürk emphasized the strategic importance of the Black Sea for regional peace, cooperation, and sustainability, highlighting the significance of sharing scientific knowledge and taking collective action.

During the meeting, participants noted that the impacts of ongoing regional conflicts on the Black Sea ecosystem are not yet fully known, but they have already resulted in serious consequences for the overall health of the ecosystem.

Despite delays in project approvals and implementation, regional funds dedicated to marine environmental protection and the development of a sustainable blue economy were reported to be making steady progress.

Participants underlined that strengthening the Black Sea's resilience against environmental pressures depends on enhanced knowledge exchange and scientific cooperation. Key topics highlighted in the presentations included:

- * Expanding the network of marine protected areas,
- * Strengthening pollution control through innovative methods,
- * Supporting the blue economy through sustainability and innovation,
- * Advancing marine research and monitoring activities,
- * Developing stakeholder cooperation and sustainable financing models,
- * Diversifying partnerships and interest groups,
- * Raising awareness and building cross-sectoral capacity.

The event also drew attention to the main challenges faced by regional initiatives. Climate change, loss of biodiversity, plastic pollution, and economic pressures such as overfishing were identified as key threats to the sustainability of the Black Sea ecosystem.

The discussions provided a valuable platform for sharing experiences, showcasing achievements, and exploring joint solutions to common challenges. The ongoing collaboration among Black Sea countries is expected to continue in the coming period, strengthening regional solidarity and contributing to a sustainable future for the Black Sea.