



COUNCIL OF EUROPE

EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION

FIFTEENTH COUNCIL OF EUROPE MEETING OF THE WORKSHOPS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION

Sustainable Landscapes and Economy

On the inestimable natural and human value of the landscape

Urgup, Nevşehir, Turkey
1-2 October 2014

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Structure of the General Directorate

Activities on strengthening the institutional capacity in the field of nature protection were held. Four departments were established within the Ministry and the regional organisation of the Ministry was restructured. There are 15 Regional Directorates, 81 Provincial Directorates, 105 Chieftaincy and 10 National Parks Directorates were established within this context.

General Country Information

Turkey has a unique geographic position at the crossroads between Europe and Asia. The country covers an area of 779,452 square kilometers. Turkey's 8,592 km coastline extends along the Black Sea, except islands and islets coastline, the Sea of Marmara, the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. The country has a vibrant, young population of more than 75 million, nearly 70 percent of which live in urban centers.

Turkey shows great diversity in geological structure, climate and environmental concerns. The country is divided into seven geographical regions: four of them are coastal zones, namely the Black Sea, Marmara, Aegean, and the Mediterranean regions and the remaining three are Central Anatolia, Eastern Anatolia and South Eastern Anatolia.

Biodiversity of Turkey

Turkey's unique location between the continents of Europe and Asia give it a rich variety of ecological characteristics. Varied climate conditions also contribute to biological diversity. Turkey, due to being located on the crossing point of Europe, Asia and Africa, being surrounded by sea on three sides have different characteristics, starting from sea level to 5000 meters above elevation differences, having climate diversity, passing two of the most important bird migration routes in West Palaearctic region from Turkey, is rich when compared with neighbors in terms of biodiversity. Moreover, the General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks is the most important guarantee in country's biodiversity, nature and management of protected areas.

While there are 12 000 flora species in Europe, Turkey has 11 000; Europe has 60 000 fauna species, Turkey a total of 80 000. Of the amount of plants 3 000 are endemic. Its varied ecology and diverse ecosystems have made Turkey home to a wider variety of species and subspecies peculiar to the region and therefore defined as endemic. Some of these endemic species are localised in specific mountain ranges. Others are more widespread, which is mostly the case in the eastern part of the country. Population growth and economic development present significant threats to endemic plant species. On the other hand, clearing ground for fields, overgrazing, forest fires, construction of dams and power plants, use of pesticides together with intensive pollution related to industrialisation and unplanned urbanisation have had a major adverse impact on Turkey's flora and fauna. Turkey is one of the third countries which has three bio-geographical regions at the same time. Furthermore, Turkey is located at an intersection of genetic centers of the Mediterranean and Near East and there are five micro-gene centers in Turkey.

Two of West Palearctic Bird Migration Routes are in Turkey

There are only three countries which have three hot spots, among 34 hot spots in the world. These countries are Turkey, China and South Africa. The three hot spots in Turkey are the Mediterranean, Iran-Anatolian and Caucasian.

There are 9 hot spots in Turkey as follows:

- İstanbul Forests
- Küre Mountains
- Kaçkar Mountains
- Fırtına Valley
- Datça and Bozburun Peninsula
- Fethiye Baba Mountain
- İbradi –Akseki Mountain
- Amanos Mountain
- Yenice Forests

Ratified International Conventions by Turkey

- Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1983)
- Convention on Wetlands (RAMSAR) (1994)
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) (1996)
- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (1997)
- Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (BERN) (1984)
- The European Landscape Convention (2001)
- Barcelona Convention, Mediterranean Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity (1988)
- Bucharest Convention, Protocol for the Protection of Biological and Landscape Diversity in the Black Sea (2004)

As for Membership Responsibilities of Turkey for EU

The Helsinki European Council held on December 10-11, 1999 produced a breakthrough in Turkey-EU relations. At Helsinki, Turkey was officially recognised, without any precondition, as a candidate state on an equal footing with the other candidate states. While recognising Turkey's candidate status, the Presidency conclusions of the Helsinki European Council endorsed the proposals of the Commission made on October 13, 1999. Thus, Turkey, like other candidate states, became eligible for a pre-accession strategy to stimulate and support its reforms. This includes an Accession Partnership, combined with a National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis. Negotiations of Turkey environmental state are going on with the EU. Also the Habitat Directive (92/43/EEC), Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) CITES and Relevant EU Directives (338/97/EC, 1808/2001/EC) are under practise.

Protected Areas in Turkey

Protected Areas	Total area (Ha)
National Parks (40)	848,202.57
Nature Parks (192)	90,218.30
Nature Conservation Areas (31)	64,242.95
Nature Monuments (112)	6,683.72
Wildlife Conservation Areas (80)	1,191,340.22
Wetlands of International Importance (135), Ramsar Sites (14)	3,215,500.10
Honey Forests (200)	2,609.72
Gene Conservation Forests- Clone Parks (257)	47,977.77
Conservation Forests (55)	320,450.54
Seed Orchards (179)	1,413.75
Special Environmental Protected Areas (16)	2,459,116.06
Natural Site Areas (1273)	1,322,748.90
City Forest (128)	11,721.93
Protected Areas (Land)	6,315,233,018
Marine Protected Areas	1,568,318,054
Total PAs	7,883,551,072

The country covers an area of 779 452 square kilometers. Turkey's 8 592 kilometre coastline extends along the Black Sea, except islands and islets coastline. Rate of protected areas of the country area is a total of 10,11% and total area of protected areas is 7 883 551 072. The protectecoastline is 1 855 km (22%).