



MINISTRY OF FORESTRY AND WATER AFFAIRS
General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks



A SUCCESS STORY IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT : “CAMİLİ BIOSPHERE RESERVE”

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Orman, Su varsa Hayat Var



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Camili Basin is located within the municipal borders of Borçka District in the Province of Artvin and it contains six villages.

Total population is approximately 1200 people. In summer season, this figure is increased by the people who are originally from the basin but they live in Borçka district and in other cities of the country.



Due to its biodiversity , natural resources, cultural and historical values, the Camili basin was included to the World Biosphere Reserves Network by UNESCO in 2005.



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FAUNAL DIVERSITY

Camili Biosphere Reserve hosts a near intact diversity of fauna typical of the area.

The particular values as conservation priorities are genetically pure Caucasian Honey Bee Race, Brown Bear (*Ursus arctos*), Chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra*), Caucasian Black Grouse (*Tetrao mlokosiewiczi*), Caucasian Viper (*Vipera kaznakovi*), Caucasian Salamander (*Mertensiella caucasica*), Big Spotted Trout (*Salmo trutta macrostigma*) and migratory raptors.





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FLORAL DIVERSITY

Camili Biosphere Reserve contains a wide variety of species and natural ecosystems linked across a considerable range of altitudes (350m-3500m).



The particular values for conservation objectives are old growth forests and temperate rain mixed forests like Caucasian spruce (*Picea orientalis*), Oriental beech (*Fagus orientalis*), Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*), and Caucasian lime (*Tilia rubra* ssp. *caucasica*), alpine and subalpine ecosystems and aquatic communities.

There are 990 flora species which 23 of them are endemics.



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HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL VALUES

The Camili area has been governed at various times by the Byzantine Empire, the Seljuk Empire, Mongols, the Ottoman Empire, Russians and Georgians .

Notable archaeological and historical features in the Camili basin include the Kemer bridge at the entrance of Efeler village, the Iremit mosque in Maral village, the church in Uğur village, Tamara’s bridge and two old prisons.

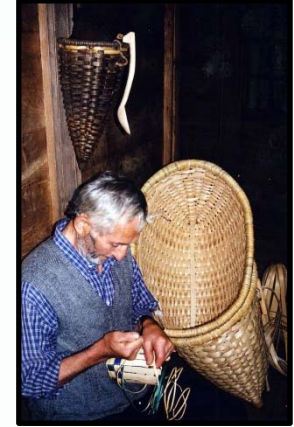




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Due to their isolation, the villagers have retained many old traditions, reflected in their livelihoods, in the design of houses and farmsteads, in the tools and materials they make and use.



Traditional dances and old folk music culture still survive in the area; the villagers have recently formed a Polyphonic Elders' Chorus with a view to preserve traditional songs for future generations.





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PROJECTS DEVELOPED IN THE REGION

The importance of the area in terms of nature conservation began during 1990s. The Camili Region is located in the Karçal Mountains where it was the pilot site of the project entitled



“ Old Growth Forests of the Blacksea Region” implemented by the Society for the Protection of Nature between 1993-1996.

With their old growth forests and landscape characteristics, Efeler and Gorgit areas were declared as Nature Conservation Area pursuant to the Law on National Park, Number 2873, by Ministry of Forestry in 1998.





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Camili basin was selected one of the four pilot sites of the project called “Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management Project” which was implemented by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry in collaboration with the World Bank and was supported by the Global Environment and Facility (GEF) between 2000-2008. By the project,

- ❖ The management plan for the basin was prepared with the participation of all stakeholders
- ❖ Forest management plan integrated with the decisions on biodiversity conservation and development was prepared





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- ❖ To introduce the basin to visitors and to support education and awareness of the school children about nature conservation, an entrance building, bird watching tower and visitor center were constructed
- ❖ To control production, marketing and selling of the Caucasian bee race which the most important value of the basin’s biodiversity and of the organic honey, a Beekeeping Committee that is consisted of the local people lived in the basin was established





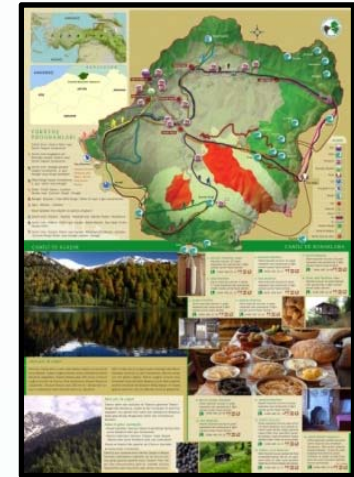
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- ❖ In order to organize accomodation and guidance services for the visitors, an Ecotourism Committee which is consisted of local people lived in the basin was established



- ❖ The information materials about the biodiversity of the Camili Biosphere Reserve and the brochures for the ecotourism activities were prepared





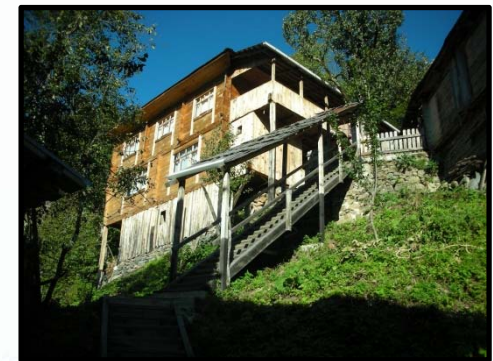
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❖ Local people were supported through the small grant programs so that the grant projects were prepared by the local people to establish the alternative income generation activities. Totally 47 projects financially and technically were supported



13 ecotourism (pension running etc.),
2 education and awareness,
23 Caucasian bee and organic honey production ,
5 traditional hand made products,
2 nature friendly animal husbandary practices,
2 agriculture applications supporting biodiversity





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With the lead of the Turkish National Commission for UNESCO and the supports of Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs and Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, in order to document and certificate that the honey produced in Camili basin is harmonised with ecological rules and it is an organic products, a project entitled “Camili Biosphere Reserve Local Products Certification Project” was implemented in 2010. Within the project;

- ❖ Local beneficiaries were trained about the organic agriculture and certification system





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- ❖ The beneficiaries, who request to be in the system,s were included to the certification system and 32 producers deserved to obtain “Organic Product Certificate”
- ❖ To use the logo and name of “Camili Biosphere Reserve of Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs” on the local products, the guaranty mark was obtained from the Turkish Patent Institute. The use of rights of the logo and name was given to the Camili Basin Village Association by the Ministry without any charge in 2011





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- ❖ The organic products certification project has provided an important contribution for economy of the local people and this approach generate a model for other sites
- ❖ The implementation of certification project has strengthened the socio-economic relations between the biosphere reserve and local people. The people who participated to the system is aware that due to the Camili is a biosphere reserve, the project was began in the basin

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The Camili Biosphere Reserve, with a side event, was introduced as one of best and successful practices in sustainable development examples to the participants during The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) which was held in Rio de Janeiro (Brasil) in 2012





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A documentary film for Camili Biosphere Reserve was prepared by a national documentary TV channel (İZ TV) with the support of the Turkish National Commission for UNESCO in 2013.

With this documentary film, natural resources, biodiversity, traditional uses and cultural lifestyle in the Camili basin are presented to national public.

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In order to increase awareness and education of the school children on protected areas and biosphere reserves, a poster named as “Protected areas and Biosphere Reserves” was prepared and distributed to the schools throughout the country in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.





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In 2014, a book entitled “Biosphere Reserves in Education for Sustainable Development: Life in Camili “Bread, Yogurt and Honey” was prepared through a project supported by the Turkish National Commission for UNESCO and was distributed to all related stakeholders in the country. In this book, how the sustainable development has been succeeded and what is the role of the biosphere reserve concept in this process are being voiced by the local people lived in the basin. (www.unesco.org.tr)





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**NATURE CONSERVATION
&
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT RELATIONSHIP**



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The main function of biosphere reserves is to develop systems and models to protect natural values and to provide socio-economic alternatives and opportunities for local people living in and around in biosphere reserves as well.

The interaction of the people and the nature in Camili has developed a unique cultural landscape and local traditions fitted with the wishes of the community.



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Because of the tough environment and nature conditions the life sources and livelihoods in the basin had depended on mainly agricultural and animal husbandary practices until recent years.

With the much recognasing of new activities in the region like ecotourism, bee keeping, organic honey and hazelnut production and other related practices, the diversity of income generations activities increased gradually.



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Visited by thousands of domestic and international people, the Camili is a unique place of the country where it is shown that how a right balance can be established between implementing of economic practices (such as pension running, guidance services, queen bee raising, honey production) and protection of biodiversity and cultural values.



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With enabling of protection of unique and rare ecosystems, species and habitats and of support nature friendly economic activities and surveys and monitoring programs carried out by scientists, NGOs and other related persons or institutions, the Camili basin achieves protection, development and research-monitoring activities which they are three significant functions of the biosphere reserves.



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NATURE FRIENDLY BUSINESS PRACTICES



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Ecotourism and In House Hospitality (Bed& Breakfast)

In 2000, while the number of tourists who visit the region was nearly zero, this figure has increased to one thousand after declaration of the area as biosphere reserve by UNESCO in 2005.

After the support of small grant programs within the context of the “Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management Project” the number of family pensions increased to twelve and the number of visitors in the basin increased to 2200 by 2006 and 6500 visitors in 2011 and approximately 30.000 visitors in 2013.





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Currently, the number of pensions is about twenty five, daily overnight accomodation capacity in the the basin is around 450 persons.



The family pensions consists of traditional wooden houses with local architecture. Houses are turned into family pensions with little modifications in order to protect local architecture. Pensions provide clean and natural accomodation facilities with warm and welcoming family environment for the guests.



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According a survey carried out in the Camili basin shows that 99% of the visitors prefer to stay in traditional wooden houses. They explain reasons for that as; warm and always welcoming family environment, experiencing traditional life style and culture, cleanness and hygiene and locally produced food as well.



Total population of Camili basin is around 1200 people and there are six villages and approximately 270 households. The services like pension operatings and other acitivities connected to them provide average annual 500.000 US Dollars for the basin.

Beekeeping

Beekeeping has been a part of economy for hundreds of year in Camili region. However, prior to the research and development projects implemented by TEMA

(The Turkish Foundation for Combating with Erosion and Reforestation), beekeeping

was carried out by traditional methods and only for honey production. By the projects, specialists determined that the bees in the basin are belongs to the highly productive Caucasian bee race which it is one of three most important bee races in the world.





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Besides, the researches showed that the genetic structure of the bees has been not changed since no migrant beekeepers enter the basin. As the Caucasian bee species lives only in the Camili basin of the country and it is genetically pure , they are also very important for the regional biodiversity.



Due to this characteristics of the basin, a special attention was given to this issue in Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management Project and a “Beekeeping Committee” was established under the Environmental Protection and Development Association with representatives from each village and unifying the producers in the region.



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In 2010, the honey in the basin was certificated as “Organic Product”.In recent years, beekeeping has become a major source for revenue and employment in the basin and it is moving towards a well known and the best quality trade mark in the sector.

Currently, approximate 200 households occupy with beekeeping and 30 tons of honey is produced per year. Annual average income for the region is about 1.500.000 US Dollars.

Furthermore, 5000 Caucasus queen bees are produced and supplied to the markets and annually 175.000 US Dollars is generated for income in the basin.

Agriculture and Animal Husbandry

Nearly each of the families has a farm for supply their needs and particularly they produce beans, cabbage and other vegetables.



Hazelnut takes an important place among the Camili's agricultural products. Hazelnut of the Camili basin is specially sought and demanded by the markets for its quality and taste. No chemical pesticides are used for nursing of hazelnuts in the region. Therefore, the hazelnut of Camili is considered as organic product.



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A total of approximately 400 tons of hazelnut is produced per year in the basin and average 1.250.000 US Dollars which are very important incomes for the people of basin is generated per year.

Animal husbandry and livestock in the region is not high. Most of the families keep animals (cows, sheep and goats) for their own needs and to supply products for the pensions.





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As the results of the abovementioned activities, average 3.500.000 US Dollars revenues are generated annually in the basin. When considering approximate 270 households settled in the basin, the annual income per household is about 13.000 US Dollars.



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CONCLUSION



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Establishment of the right balance between conservation and development requests on the one hand, enhancing of the sustainable livelihood facilities for local people on the other hand, supporting of them for getting the standards of desired development.



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As defined in the Seville Strategy, the legal basis of biosphere reserves, prepared in Seville City of Spain in 1995, the biosphere reserves are the areas where sustainable economic and human development are promoted, on the other hand species, genetic resources and ecosystems are protected.



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The main themes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) which was held in 2012 were “ Green Economy ” and “Sustainable Development” and the final report of the conference states that livelihoods of the people lived especially in rural areas must be enhanced and biodiversity should be protected.



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This statement has much increased the significance of biosphere reserve concept nowadays.

Therefore in order to achieve the goals for protecting of biodiversity and provide economic development for people in a balanced way, to increase the numbers of biosphere reserves in the country and in the world will make a positive contribution in terms of achieving the target.



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Camili Biosphere Reserve with its landscape values, biodiversity, natural resources and local traditional culture, is one of the unique places in the country and in the world.

Together with its difficult field conditions the people of the basin is aware of the significance of nature and its impacts to their life.



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YOU ARE INVITED TO THIS TIMELESS AND MAGICAL BASIN
JUST TO LEAVE BEHIND
YOUR FOOTPRINTS!



Orman, Su varsa Hayat Var



T.C.
Orman ve Su İşleri
Bakanlığı

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