

**Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1
on the revised regulations for the European Diploma for Protected Areas**

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 February 2008
at the 1018th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)¹*

Appendix 5: Model plan for annual reports

Annual report for the year 2021

Annual reports should describe the changes that have taken place since the previous year in dynamic terms of management and function and not be limited to basic data. Any new text or map introducing a change in the situation of the area should be attached to the annual report.

State: TURKIYE

Name of the area: Kuşçenneti National Park (Bird paradise National Park)

Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas:
2021 - 2024

Central authority concerned:

Name: General Directorate of Nature Conservation & National Parks

General Director: İsmail ÜZMEZ

Zerrin KARAARSLAN Landscape Architect (MSc)

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Authority responsible for its management:

Name: Regional Directorate of Agriculture and Forestry (Mrs. Kader GÜLEÇ)

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¹ As amended by Resolution CM/ResDip(2014)2 on 2 July 2014 at the 1204th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies.
Internet : <http://www.coe.int/cm>

1. **Conditions:** List here all conditions which were attached to the award or the renewal of the European Diploma. Explain either how the conditions have been totally complied with or detail the progress in complying with the conditions. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

1. finalise the revised management plan within one year and commence implementation of all actions and conditions found therein;

Kuşçenneti National Park management plan called “Long Term Development Plan and Wetland Management Plan” was approved by the Ministry Authority in May 2019. The activities defined in the plan were started to be implemented after the approval of the plan. Detailed list of activities at Action Plan is given at the Report’s “Site Management” section.

2. submit any development project regarding the lake, its shores and tributaries, or concerning agricultural or industrial facilities, to a rigorous environmental impact study, the conclusions of which should be communicated to the Council of Europe;

The targets for precision protection in the park have been defined in the already approved plan and have been started to be implemented carefully from 2019 onwards.

In addition, Susurluk River Basin Management Plan prepared by General Directorate of Water Management within the project called “Technical Assistance for the Conversion of River Basin Action Plans into River Basin Management Plans (EuropeAid/134561/D/SER/TR). This management plan prepared in 2018 and will be implemented within the period 2018-2024. There are many measures for increasing amount and quality of the water bodies in Susurluk River Basin. This Management Plan also involves Kocaçay-Manyas sub basin.

3. regularly monitor the breeding bird population of the park, and carry out research on the dynamics of these populations particularly at Siğirci Delta and Koçocay Delta;

Since 2010 bird population dynamics have been observed and recorded at 12 different points, especially in Siğirci Delta and Kocaçay Delta. Bird counting data for 2021 is attached (Annex-1).

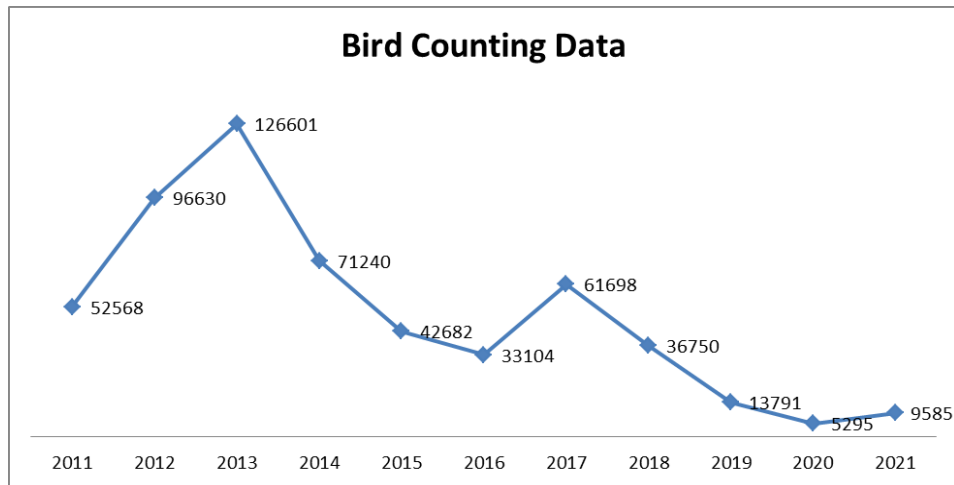


Figure 1. Bird Counting Data Between 2011 – 2021

Beside regular monitoring on breeding bird population in national park, provincial level biodiversity research was conducted in Balıkesir in 2019 and monitoring efforts still continue. A part of research involves Kuşçenneti NP. Outputs of the research related to the Kuşçenneti NP involving 3 terms in 2021 is attached (Annex-2).

Meanwhile a research on waterfowl of Manyas Lake remains with the coordination of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zeynel ARSLANGÜNDOĞDU who is a lecturer in Istanbul University in the scope of the research project titled “Establishment of Integrated Ecosystem Modeling Decision Support System for Management of Manyas Lake Basin”.

Besides regular monitoring on breeding bird population in national park, the new IPA Project titled “Preparation, Implementation and Monitoring of Species Action Plans for Endangered Species in Turkey within the Concept of a New Methodology” has just started. With this project, Turkey will prepare its species action plans and national species conservation strategy which involves several methods for conservation of endangered species particularly for priority species listed in Annexes of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21.5.1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and of Council Directive 2009/147/EC of 30.11.2009 on the conservation of wild birds. *Pelecanus crispus*, *Aythya nyroca*, *Aythya ferina* and *Oxyura leucocephala* are specified endangered species within the project. Currently monitoring program for this species has already started in Kuşçenneti NP.

4. continue efforts to control pollution caused by poultry and livestock farming and monitor continually the water quality of the lake and of the streams flowing into it.

The water quality examination and control of Sigirci River is monitored by General Directorate of State Water Affairs.

There are no facilities within the boundaries of the National Park. All facilities in the buffer zone are permitted according to "Annex-2 of the Regulation on the Protection of Wetlands" and related clauses in Kuscenneti National Park Long Term Development Plan and Wetland Management Plan. Within this scope new applications for high capacity stock farming are not allowed.

- 2. Recommendations:** List here all recommendations which were attached to the award or the renewal of the European Diploma. Explain either how the recommendations have been totally complied with or detail the progress in complying with the recommendations. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

1. increase the number of staff to meet the increased workload due to the park's enlargement;

There have been some changes in the number of park staff with structural change to Bird Paradise National Park Chiefdom. Bird Paradise National Park Chiefdom which was responsible for more area besides national park, was divided into two parts in 2020. Thus staff of Chiefdom which is responsible for only national park decreased. Currently a biologist (MSc) who is a NP Manager, a forestry engineer who is a consultant, a veterinarian, a forest guard, a driver and 5 workers have been assigned to management unit of National Park.

One of the most important problems in the assignment of personnel in the field was the housing problem of the staff. In order to eliminate this problem, 4 lodgings were allocated (Annex 3). One of these lodgings is currently used as the chief's office until the renovation of the Administration and Visitor Promotion Center is completed. These lodgings will be given to the staff after renovation. In this way it is planned to increase the number of staff working for national park in the next years.

2. ensure the natural fluctuations in the lake's water level, including spring flooding and the drying up of the shoreline in summer;

According to long term monitoring results, the lake's natural water level shows seasonal changes from 14 m to 17 m. There is parallelism between the changes in lake water level and regional precipitation and Manyas Stream flows. In the last 10 years, there have not been any adverse effects resulting from General Directorate of State Water Affairs practices that may affect the bird population. Water fluctuations are caused by seasonal fluctuations and weather conditions. Daily water level monitoring is done according to annual operating program prepared by General Directorate of State Water Affairs and natural fluctuation is observed. Water level measurement records including last 10 years is attached (Annex-4).

3. set up a small wardening unit on the southern shore of the lake (in the Kocaçay Delta area) to guarantee the protection of the area.

In the Kocaçay Delta section, the wardening unit has been defined in the already approved plan and will be implemented according to budget allocation.

- 3. Site Management:** List here any changes to the European Diploma holding site management, in relation to both terrestrial and aquatic environments (as appropriate), and in relation to staff and finances, since the last annual report was submitted to the Council of Europe. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

Site management for the national park is the routine activity of national park authorities. Effectiveness of management activities is also monitored by using The Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) in every three years. Result of outputs of these monitoring efforts directly integrates to the management of national park.

Management effectiveness of Kuşçenneti National Park assessed 2021 three years after the last assessment in 2018. Management effectiveness scores for last two periods is given Table 1.

Table1. Management effectiveness scores for Kuşçenneti National Park.

Category	Score in 2018	Score in 2021
Context	3	3
Planning	7	11
Inputs	12	13
Processes	17	20
Outputs	6	8
Outcomes	5	5
Total Score	50	60

By comparing assessments of the last two periods, the trend on management effectiveness of Kuşçenneti National Park can be defined. As seen in Figure 1, management effectiveness of Kuşçenneti National Park increased in the last three years. Approval of the management plan and implementation of activities in the action plan has key roles at increasing trend.

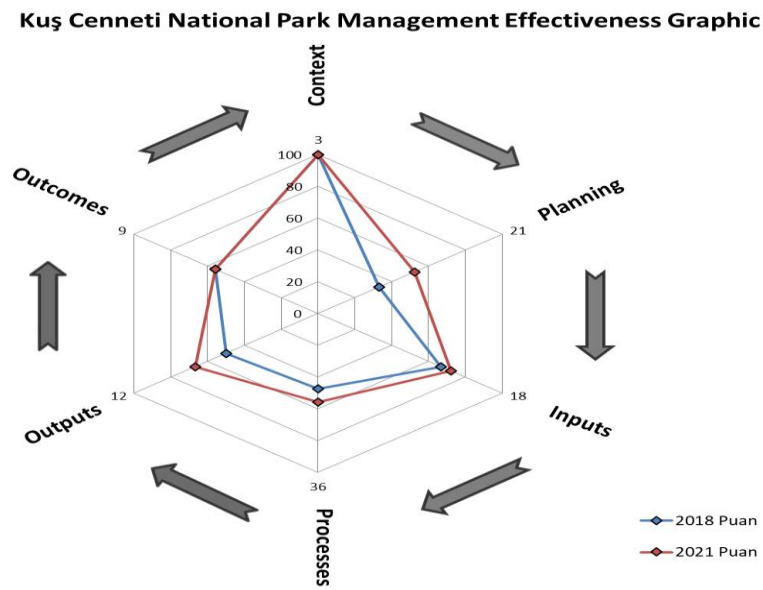


Figure 2. Trend on Management Effectiveness of Kuşçenneti National Park

The activities defined in the Long Term Development Plan and Wetland Management Plan were started to be implemented after the approval of the plan. To increase Management Effectiveness Action Plan in management plan is followed strictly.

Detailed list of activities at Action Plan is given below with management goals;

Management Goal 1: To establish and effectively manage the necessary technical and administrative management structure for Kuşçenneti National Park.

- For increasing management effectiveness Bird Paradise National Park Chiefdom which was responsible for more area besides national park, was divided into two parts in 2020. Now it is just responsible for National Park.

- The project included major renovation of the Administration and Visitor Promotion Center has been prepared and approved. Budget allocation for construction has been made and renovation started by 2020. Design and current photos from construction area is given at Annex-5.

- Before the breeding period of the birds, new trees are planted in place of the dried ones in the Sığırcı Delta.

- Maintenance and reed coating of current (58 pieces) pelican nests continue regularly. 10 new pelican nests are prepared and will be installed (Annex 6).

- Renovation of current bird observation towers has been started and an elevator system installed to tower to ensure access of disabled people (Annex 7).

- Social facilities included 6 WC, 1 Disabled WC, 1 Baby Change Unit and 2 Prayer Room completed in 2019 and open for usage of visitors in 2020.

- Field vehicles that have been allocated for use in the park are a land vehicle, a tractor, a boat and a motor cycle.

- Visitor numbers and profiles are monitored regularly. Data on visitor numbers is attached (Annex-8).

Management Goal 2: To protect and improve the sensitive habitats and the biodiversity associated with them in Kuşçenneti National Park.

- A good park signage system is conducted for effective information and direction for people to find their way around the park. Signs have been put up especially at the entrance points of the area and at the points where birds breed intensively. Also warning signs against illegal hunting have been placed.

- Wild life monitoring efforts continue regularly via camera traps and other optical systems.

- Bird population dynamics are observed and recorded regularly.

- A research on the increase in the *Phalacrocorax carbo* population nesting in the area and its impact on breeding habitats and other bird species has been initiated.

- Meanwhile a research on waterfowl of Manyas Lake remains with the coordination of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zeynel ARSLANGÜNDOĞDU who is a lecturer in Istanbul University in the scope of the research project titled "Establishment of Integrated Ecosystem Modeling Decision Support System for Management of Manyas Lake Basin".

- Regular field checks are made throughout the year in order to prevent illegal hunting and fishing.

- Fish species and their population in the lake monitored regularly by District Agricultural Directorate. Result of monitoring activities show that population of *carassius*, which is an invasive species in the lake, has been reduced by monitoring and controlled fishing practices.

- The water quality examination and control of Sigirci River is monitored by General Directorate of State Water Affairs.

- Daily water level monitoring is done according to annual operating program prepared by General Directorate of State Water Affairs.

Management Goal 3: To contribute to raising individuals who understand nature, respect nature and take responsibility in protecting it.

- Trainings are given to the local people on illegal hunting and the protection of the national park.

Within the scope of the "Bandırma Bird Paradise Festival", which is held every year, more space is given to the activities of the Kuşçenneti National Park.

- Promotional products, brochures, books, etc. are being prepared for introducing resource values of the national park for different target groups,

- Educational programs are organized for different student groups in schools.

- Bird watching trainings are organized for primary, high school and university students in cooperation with schools and NGOs.

4. Boundaries: Give details of any changes to the boundaries of the European Diploma holding site since the last annual report was submitted to the Council of Europe. If there are any changes, please attach an appropriate map to this report. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

There is no change in the boundary of the National Park since the last annual report was submitted to the Council of Europe.

5. Other information: List here any other information about the European Diploma holding site which you consider should be provided to the Council of Europe.

Currently completed researches in Kuşçenneti National Park:

- PhD. Thesis: Manyas Kuş Lake zooplankton community structure, Elif Irmak Türkmen, 2018.

- Master Thesis: Determination of pressures and impacts in Manyas Lake basin, Aslıhan Benlioğlu, 2019

- Master Thesis: Phytoplankton Ecology of Manyas Dam, Mahide Balaban Karasakal, Balıkesir University Institute of Science Biology, 2019.

- Master Thesis: An investigation on the breeding of *Podiceps cristatus* in Bird Paradise National Park Kader Güleç, 2020.

- PhD. Thesis: Paleoclimatic and Paleoecological Records of Manyas (Kuş) Lake Deposits, Şeyda Kartum, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University School of Graduate Studies, Doctoral Dissertation in Geography Science, 2021

The following sections of the form should only be filled in if your area is in the year before a renewal of its European Diploma for Protected Areas, i.e. year 4 after the award of the European Diploma or year 9 after its renewal.

6. Natural heritage (general abiotic description: geomorphology, geology and hydrogeology, habitats, flora, fauna, landscape) – State of conservation

- 6.1. Environment: changes or deterioration in the environment, of natural or anthropic origin, accidental or permanent, actual or anticipated
- 6.2. Flora and vegetation: changes in the plant population and in the vegetational cover; presumed causes
- 6.3. Fauna: changes in the sedentary or migratory populations; congregating, egg-laying and breeding grounds

7. Cultural heritage and socio-economic context

- 7.1. Cultural heritage
 - 7.1.1. Changes concerning cultural heritage
- 7.2. Socio-economic context
 - 7.2.1. Changes concerning the socio-economic context

8. Education and scientific interest

- 8.1. Visitors – Information policy
 - 8.1.1. Arrangements for receiving and informing the public (building, booklets, maps, cards, etc.)
 - 8.1.2. Frequentation by visitors and behavior (number, distribution in time and space)
 - 8.1.3. Special visits (distinguished persons, groups, etc.)
- 8.2. Scientific research
 - 8.2.1. Current or completed research (observation, experimentation, etc.; identification or inventory of the species listed in the appendices to the Bern Convention, etc.)
 - 8.2.2. Scientific publications

9. Site description (vulnerability, protection status, ownership, documentation)

- 9.1. Changes in legislation or regulations
- 9.2. Changes in ownership title (conversion to public property, rentals, etc.)
- 9.3. Extension or transfer, new uses (for example, conversion into total reserve)

10. Site management (management plans, budget and personnel)

- 10.1. Improvements made
 - 10.1.1. Ecological action affecting the flora and biotopes; controls of fauna
 - 10.1.2. Protection against the elements (fire, water regime)
 - 10.1.3. Approaches and thoroughfares (paths, roads, car parks, signposting, fencing, etc.)
 - 10.1.4. Field equipment (hides and study facilities)
 - 10.1.5. Waste management
 - 10.1.6. Use of renewable energy systems
- 10.2. Management
 - 10.2.1. Administrative department: changes made
 - 10.2.2. Wardens' department: changes made

10.2.3. Internal policing measures

10.2.4. Infringement of regulations and damage; legal action

11. Influence of the award of the European Diploma for Protected Areas

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