

Convention on the Conservation
of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats

Standing Committee

Recommendation No. 226 (2024) of the Standing Committee, adopted on 6th December 2024, on Mersin Anamur Beach:

The Standing Committee of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, acting under the terms of Article 14 of the Convention,

Having regard to the aims of the Convention to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats;

Recalling that Article 1, paragraph 2, of the Convention requires Parties to give particular emphasis to the conservation of endangered and vulnerable species;

Recalling that Article 3, paragraph 1, of the Convention provides that each Contracting Parties shall take steps to promote national policies for the conservation of wild fauna and natural habitats, with particular attention to endangered and vulnerable species, especially endemic ones, and endangered habitats;

Recalling that Article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention provides that each Contracting Party shall take appropriate and necessary legislative and administrative measures to ensure the conservation of the habitats of the wild fauna species, especially those listed in Appendix II to the Convention;

Recalling that Article 4, paragraph 2, further stipulates that Contracting Parties, in their planning and development policies, shall have regard to the conservation requirements of the areas protected under the preceding paragraph, so as to avoid or minimise as far as possible any deterioration of such areas;

Recalling that Article 6 of the Convention provides that each Contracting Party shall take appropriate and necessary legislative and administrative measures to ensure the special protection of the wild fauna species specified in Appendix II to the Convention, particularly by prohibiting the deliberate damage to or destruction of breeding sites;

Noting that *Caretta caretta*, *Chelonia mydas* and *Trionyx triunguis* are strictly protected turtle species listed in Appendix II to the Convention;

Recalling the Guidance Tool on conservation of sea turtle nesting sites ([T-PVS\(2023\)30](#)), providing guidance to Contracting Parties in the Mediterranean;

Recognising the high natural value of the Anamur Mersin Beach as an important nesting area for *Caretta caretta*, *Chelonia mydas*, and possibly *Trionyx triunguis*, the species observed in the area, reportedly inhabiting rivers near to the mouth to the sea and nesting on sandy coastal beaches;

Noting that the future of the populations of the above-mentioned three species of turtles in the Mediterranean are largely dependent on the maintenance of conservation activities, including those in Anamur Mersin;

Recalling the [Resolution \(78\) 22](#) of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on threatened amphibians and reptiles in Europe;

Recalling the following recommendations of the Standing Committee:

- [No. 7 \(1987\)](#) on the protection of marine turtles and their habitat;
- [No. 8 \(1987\)](#) on the protection of marine turtles in Dalyan and other important areas in Türkiye;
- [No. 12 \(1988\)](#) concerning the protection of important turtle nesting beaches in Türkiye;
- No. 13 (1988) concerning measures for the protection of critical biotopes of endangered amphibians and reptiles;
- [No. 24 \(1991\)](#) on the protection of some beaches in Türkiye of particular importance to marine turtles;
- [No. 54 \(1996\)](#) on the conservation of *Caretta caretta* at Patara;
- [No. 66 \(1998\)](#) on the conservation status of some nesting beaches for marine turtles in Türkiye.

Recalling Turkish national and regional legislation aiming to protect habitats and species;

Recognising the efforts of the Government of Türkiye to protect the nesting beaches for marine turtles;

Taking note of the report of the on-the-spot appraisal carried out by an independent expert on 2nd to 4th July 2024 (document [T-PVS/Inf\(2024\)13](#));

Recommends to the Government of Türkiye, in cooperation with local and regional authorities when relevant, to:

1. Remedy Stage 1 and 2 design issues, which mainly relate to poor lighting choices and light control. Consider erecting a fence along the beach edge to deter people from entering the beach at night.
2. Review the remaining Stage 2 and Stage 3 development plans to ensure they are necessary and are compatible with preservation of successful, undisturbed turtle nesting.
3. Enforce existing legislation by removal of illegal development, structures and impactful lighting from all areas of beach but especially the area of bungalows and restaurant on beach section 2 that may act as a catalyst for similar such developments away from the urban centre.
4. Increase number of signs that have information on sea turtles and the dos and don'ts for behaviour on the nesting beach at beach entrances. Create new signs to attach to each protective nest cage so that each nest has key information associated with it.
5. Improve turtle monitoring and protection capacity through training and increasing the number of people involved in daily surveys. Collect all relevant data indicated in Guidance Tool, starting as soon as possible by recording the location of each turtle nest using GPS to support scientific analyses and interpretation of the status of turtles and their habitats.
6. Design a hatchling management plan to be prepared for occurrences of hatchling disorientation caused by artificial lighting and respond promptly and strongly to adjust, revise or eliminate problematic lighting.
7. Undertake surveys for presence of Nile soft shelled turtles at all historically known sites along Anamur beach and commission ecological study for feasibility of restoring sites where presence remains, and nesting was previously reported.
8. Create a turtle protection network composed of authorities, NGOs, local stakeholders and concerned individuals that regularly meet to discuss issues and their solutions.
9. Create a turtle monitoring group composed of authorities, NGOs, local stakeholders and concerned individuals to better monitor the turtle nesting activity. Investigate the potential for bringing in academic and voluntary teams to contribute to the monitoring. Given that Anamur beach potentially hosts one of the top five loggerhead turtle nesting areas in the Mediterranean accurate assessment of activity is strongly warranted.