

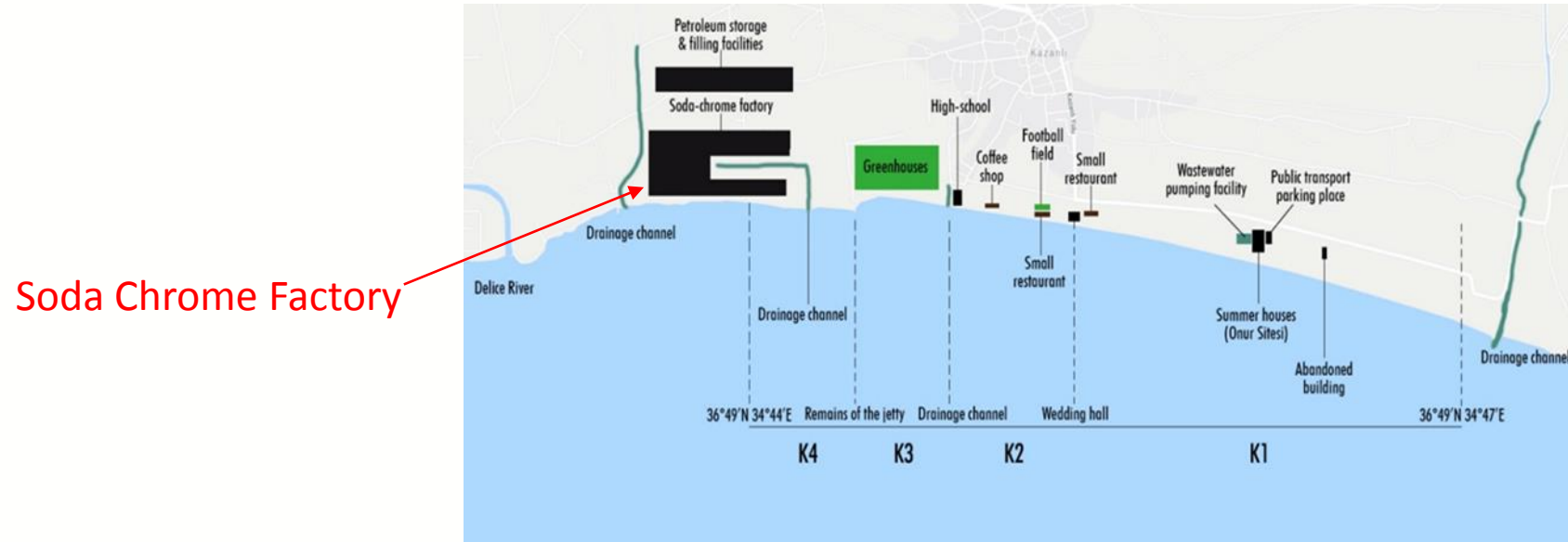
## Agenda Item 6.3: Follow up of Recommendation No. 95 (2002) on the conservation of marine turtles in Kazanlı (Turkey)



43<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee  
Bern Convention

27<sup>th</sup> November – 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023

# IMPORTANCE OF KAZANLI SEA TURTLE NESTING SITE



- Kazanlı beach is located in southern Turkey. It is **one of the top three green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) nesting beaches in the Mediterranean**.
- Conservation problems regarding Kazanlı, were first reported to the Bern Convention in 1999. In 2000 and 2001, MEDASSET alerted about the release of toxic waste into the sea from the beachside Soda Chrome Factory and seawater sample analysis revealed **chromium concentration 13.500 times higher** than permitted levels. A case file was opened in 2000, followed by Recommendation No. 95 (2002) “on the conservation of marine turtles in Kazanlı beach (Turkey)”.

# NO PROGRESS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATION NO. 95 (2002)

- MEDASSET visited Kazanlı in July 2023 to assess the implementation of Recommendation No. 95 (2002) and we documented the significant and alarming issues which remain:
  - There is **insufficient action in relation to five Recommendation points** that require continual implementation, resulting in widespread litter (Point 3), lack of nest monitoring (Point 5), lack of information (Point 7), and signs of agrochemical pollution (Point 14).
  - **Seven points have not been implemented to date:** Points 1, 4, 6, 9, 10, 11, and 13.
  - Of great concern **is the illegal discharge detected in front of the soda-chromium** factory. We observed and documented shiny and crystallized waste materials in the middle of the beach (Point 5).

**Rec. No. 95 Point No 1:** Remove as a matter of urgency, the row of greenhouses closest to the sea in beach section K3; remove, as soon as feasible, other greenhouses in beach section K3 through the appropriate legal and administrative procedures and restore that space to favour turtle nesting

- There seems to be **no attempt at restoring** the nesting zone. Greenhouses in beach section K3 still **remain**. Area **heavily littered** with plastic wastes. (Fig.1).
- The earth graded secondary road used in the K3 region is combined with the beach and causes heavy noise and light pollution. (Fig. 2).
- There is intense **macropollution** throughout the area and many **stray dogs** (Fig. 3).



Fig.1 Greenhouses remain. Heavy pollution.



Fig. 2 Road combined with the beach.



Fig. 3 macropollution and stray dogs



## Rec. No. 95 Point No 2: Moving the taxi parking area away from the beach as a matter of urgency

- It is a fact that **the taxi parking area has been removed a long time ago**, which results in Government Reports simply stating “it’s no longer there”, even though **there are other parking areas and vehicles that cause light and noise pollution**.
- There are two restaurants located on K2. Both customer parking are active. Both car parks are illuminated from a high point causing severe light pollution.
- Thus **we strongly suggest that Measure 2 is amended** to state “Prohibiting vehicle parking in general, near/facing the nesting beach” and extending Measure 4 as to cover “all light pollution reflecting on the nesting beach”.



## Rec. No. 95 Point No 3: Periodically remove the plastic debris from the beach

- There is **intense macro-pollution** throughout the beach.
- **No cleaning activity** has been identified by the municipality, local people, or industrial establishments. The cleaning activity carried out by the local NGO (Akdeniz Üçüncü Göz Eğitim ve Gençlik Derneği - Third Eye Mediterranean Society) in previous years did not take place this year as a result of the severe earthquake that occurred on February 6, 2023.



**Rec. No. 95 Point No 4:** Screening the lights of the municipality of Kazanli and the Soda-Chrome factory to avoid light-pollution on the beach

- The lights of the Soda-Chromium factory **adversely affect almost the entire area**. However, it shows the most serious effect in K3. There is also **severe noise and light pollution from beach restaurants**.
- On the positive side, almost all of the public lighting is amber toned. In particular, the lighting on the newly built road behind K1 is placed to face the opposite direction of the beach and again in amber tones.



**Severe light pollution from the Soda – Chromium factory and from beach restaurants**



## Rec. No. 95 Point No 5: Maintain monitoring of the chemical waste discharge into the sea by the chromium factory

- The factory's website includes some information on chemical and physical analyses of glass and chemical products, raw materials, metal and industrial waste samples. However, **it does not provide analysis results regarding the chemical waste discharge.**
- Towards the middle of the beach, shiny and crystallized waste materials were seen on the sandy area (Fig.1). In this part, **a discharge area, believed illegal, has been documented within the factory.** Of serious concern are **several pipes extending into the sea beyond the northern border of K4, which might be discharging chemical wastes from the factory,** especially the six pipes very close to the factory's northern end. (Fig.2)

Fig.1

**Shiny and crystallized waste materials!**



Fig.2 A small pipeline construction on the west part of the Soda-Chromium factory





## Rec. No. 95 Point No 5: Establish a reliable and permanent monitoring of nesting activities in the beach

- The Nature Conservancy carried out an **irregular monitoring** study during the 2023 nesting seasons (as in 2022). In the monitoring study, some nests were marked (date, nest number, etc.), while wooden sticks were planted in the body pit of others. It has been determined that there are no nests at many points marked as such and many actual nests are unmarked. In summary, based on our information, a **monitoring and protection activity** that received professional (or academic) support **was last carried out in 2021**.



**Rec. No. 95 Point No 6:** Setting in place monitoring of beach erosion, in order to take remedial measures, as needed

- There is **no information regarding any means of monitoring the coastal erosion of nesting beaches** in Kazanlı. The only remedial measure taken against the beach erosion problem in the SPA continues to be the **arbitrary use of boulders and concrete/cement structures**.
- In K4, the entire coastline is bordered with large boulders, and there is **virtually no available sandy zone suitable for nesting**.



In K4 Entire coastline bordered with large boulders.  
No nesting possible.

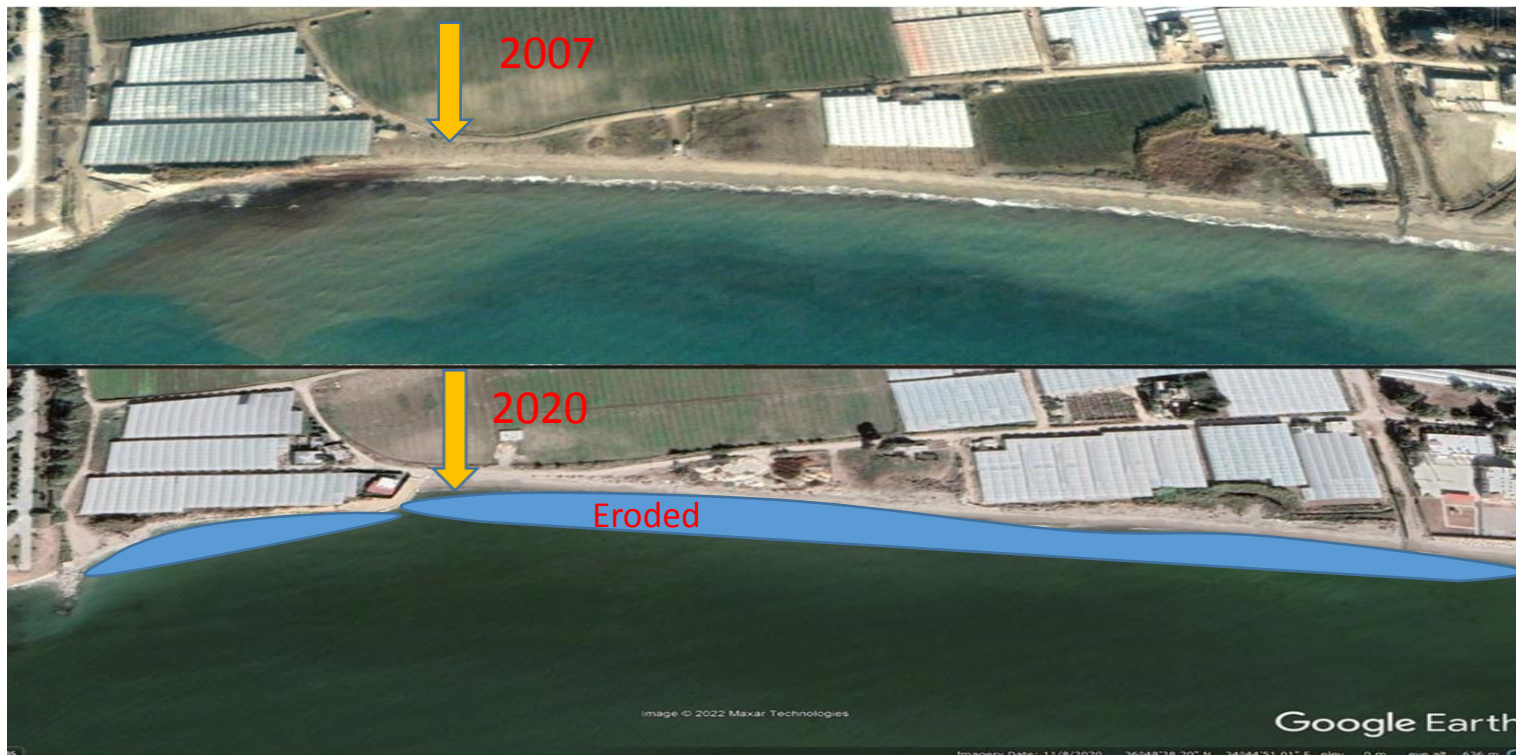


Arbitrary use of boulders and concrete/cement  
Structures.



**Rec. No. 95 Point No 6:** Setting in place monitoring of beach erosion, in order to take remedial measures, as needed

- In K3, large boulders line the front of the greenhouses at the northern end, near the drainage channel. There seems to be enough sandy zone for nesting although it is heavily littered.
- At the southern border of K2, boulders supporting the school wall adjacent to the drainage channel still seem to be helping in preventing further loss of sand.
- No coastal erosion was observed in K1, but the artificially made sand hills at both sides of the large drainage channel mid-section remain and there was no effort to restore.





**Rec. No. 95 Point No 7:** Promote public awareness on the presence and interest of marine turtle nesting in Kazanlı, addressed in particular to local population

- As of July 2023, **not a single proper “sea turtle nesting beach” sign** was seen in the entire SPA.
- The **public is uninformed**, there is careless beach usage at nights, severe littering, fishing activities and even goat herding on the nesting beaches.

**Rec. No. 95 Point No 8:** Fully implementing the existing environment plan and assure the necessary financial and human resources to this end

- The Environment Status report published by the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change, Mersin Provincial Directorate was last published in 2021. **There is no information about implementing environmental plans** within the scope of this report.

**Rec. No. 95 Point No 9:** Removing the illegal building in beach section K1

- The illegal structure **still remains** in K1. The building is abandoned.



**Rec. No. 95 Point No 10:** Removing as appropriate the hazardous waste accumulated over the years close to the beach as a result of industrial activities

- The Government Reports state that the wastes from the Soda-Chromium Factory are “neutralized, pressed, and then deposited in a temporary landfill which is surrounded by an impenetrable geomembrane covering”.
- The “temporary” landfill area continues to be **too close to the beach**, inside the factory’s building complex. During our survey, it was observed that **the landfill areas maintained their current location and condition**. In addition, **direct discharge into the sea has been detected**, raising serious environmental concerns.



**Rec. No. 95 Point No 11:** Considering the removal of the wedding hall of Kazanli from the beach, to be relocated elsewhere

- The wedding hall in section K3 rarely operates. Cemre Kır Bahçesi is the new popular place for weddings now. Restaurants in the surrounding area are also used for wedding and engagement-style entertainment. **While the venues change the problem remains.**



**Cemre Kır Bahçesi wedding hall**



## Rec. No. 95 Point No 12: Applying appropriate treatment to sewage waters from Kazanlı, in order to free the back of the beach from pollution



- Sewage water from Kazanlı is pumped to Karaduvar waste water treatment facility, where it is treated before being released to the sea.
- Monthly analysis reports of wastewater treatment facilities can be found on the website of MESKİ - Mersin Water and Sewerage Administration). The latest analysis report available is for January 2023 is inadequate as it only includes results for suspended solid matter, biochemical and chemical oxygen, total nitrogen and total phosphorus **with no information on heavy metals.**
- **Existing drainage channels next to soda-chromium factory** cause concern about pollution



**Rec. No. 95 Point No 13:** Looking for an appropriate solution to remove houses on the beach that were constructed legally

- The summer house complex called “Onur Sitesi” remains on section K1 and is a source of light pollution at night.
- Although the Government Report of 2019 stated that the complex was constructed legally and thus cannot be removed, the parcel was included in the “Sustainable Protection and Controlled Usage Area” published in November 2020.



	Natural Site - Qualified Natural Protection Area
	Natural Site - Sustainable Protection and Controlled Usage Area

**Rec. No. 95 Point No 14:** Reducing the impact of agrochemical products in the area around Kazanlı:

- Drainage channels that directly or indirectly flow into the sea are **possible sources of agrochemical contamination**, and **chemical waste analysis reports are required for all of them** due to abundant agricultural practices in the region.





## We encourage the Turkish Government to:

- Urgently implement all outstanding measures under Recommendation No. 95 (2002).
- Safeguard Kazanlı nesting beaches against any coastal build-up
- Provide information, requested in 2021 as well, of maps and details in relation to the “Kazanlı Tourism Development plan”/“Kazanlı Beach Arrangement Project”, and the designation of “Sustainable Development and Controlled Usage” areas and “Nature Conservation” areas

## We call upon the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention

### to:

- Follow-up Recommendation No. 95 (2002) **especially regarding the implementation of erosion control and toxic waste removal**
- Urge Turkish authorities to fully implement Recommendation No. 95 (2002) with no further delay.

Thank you for your attention!