

TURQUOISE COAST ENVIRONMENT FUND



ANNUAL REVIEW 2022-2023





Everywhere you look there are brilliant, passionate people working to create positive environmental change. Small amounts of funding, strategically directed, can supercharge this work.

BEN GOLDSMITH, FOUNDER, CONSERVATION COLLECTIVE

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OUR VISION

The Turquoise Coast Environment Fund (TCEF) aims to protect, restore and regenerate the natural beauty, biodiversity and ecosystems of Turkey's exceptional marine and coastal resources.

TCEF was established in 2022 to empower Turkish communities to actively engage in and contribute to the transformation towards sustainable food systems, biodiversity and ecosystem conservation. We believe environmental sustainability and economic renewal can go hand in hand.

In our first year, we supported 13 brilliant grassroots projects tackling the climate, biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services, awarding more than £ 110,000.

OUR STRATEGY

We facilitate our vision and achieve our goals by:

Raising funds from people and businesses with strong connections to their homeland to support the best local initiatives to sustain Turkey's diverse natural assets.

Supporting projects that bring both economic and social benefits to local communities and which can be scaled up and replicated across the region.

Building a solid network of people across Turkey, united in boosting the work of local environmental champions.



The Turquoise Coast Environment Fund is a member of Conservation Collective, a global network of local foundations funding effective grass-roots conservation initiatives to protect the environment, restore nature and safeguard against climate change

2022

AT A GLANCE



PROJECTS

13



PARTNERS

13

TOTAL AMOUNT RAISED

£115,000

HOW WE WORK

Channeling funds from businesses and philanthropists to grassroots nature regeneration projects.

Tapping into our network of experts to ensure we support the projects offering the largest returns for nature.

Seeking to build local coalitions that catalyse systemic change.

Attracting new sources of environmental funding by showcasing what can be achieved by nature regeneration.

Pooling funds and creating leverage to amplify impact.

We strongly believe that supporting local environmental groups will make a positive impact and bring about long-lasting change.



“Turkey is home to remarkable landscapes and species with a mesmerizing coastline. At Turquoise Coast Environment Fund, we believe conservation is not a choice. It is our moral duty. Our collective efforts bond our future, where harmony between nature and people prevails. Every challenge is an opportunity, and every contribution paves the way for a lasting impact. Let’s protect, restore, and sustain our magnificent Turquoise Coasts!”

DR AYSEGUL CIL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Aysegul has actively worked in biodiversity, nature, and participatory coastal zone management since 2001. She received her Ph.D. from Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam on Collaborative Coastal Management. She believes in the power of people and local actions within communities.

IMPACT SNAPSHOT



Projects funded to date



local partners



supporters



AREAS OF INTEREST

1 Sustainable food systems

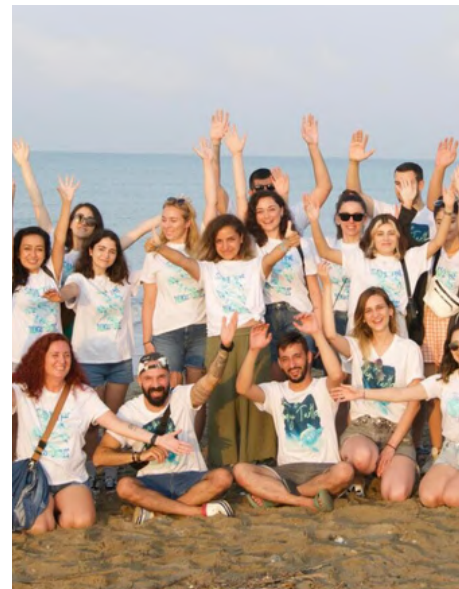
As Turkey's population continues to grow, safeguarding and rejuvenating our connection between food and agriculture is vital. Recognising small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture as sustainable food production methods is crucial, given the myriad of challenges our current food systems face.

We fund holistic projects, spanning farm-to-fork strategies and various food production systems, including agroecology and agrotourism. Our focus is on initiatives that foster successful socio-economic practices, particularly benefiting small-scale fisheries and coastal communities, leading to positive conservation outcomes in our seascapes.



2 Empowerment of local NGOs

TCEF's mission is to recognise and assist local champions, including activists and researchers, who may lack the necessary skills, resources, or access to fully realise their potential impact. We empower these groups and individuals by providing funding, along with support in advocacy, networking, and knowledge sharing.



3 Biodiversity and ecosystem services

TCEF funds marine, coastal, and terrestrial conservation projects. We advocate for community-driven, holistic and transparent management of resources. Additionally, we support approaches that aid in the restoration of agroecosystems, forests, wetlands, coastal and marine ecosystems and soil.



TCEF PROJECTS MAP

TCEF has played a pivotal role in nurturing 19 projects along the Turquoise Coast, providing essential funding that has allowed grassroots conservation initiatives to thrive and impact the region's natural beauty and biodiversity. The red numbers on the right-hand side map correspond with the project names. Click the links below to learn more about the projects and our grantees.

1. [Landscapes From The Sea - DYKD](#)
2. [Gökçeada Island- Impact Circles Foundation](#)
3. [Gökçeada Salt Lake Wetland - Water Ecosystems Conservation Association](#)
4. [Poyraz Bird and Snake Fish Project - Kazdağı Association](#)
5. [Coexistence of Nature and Culture In Aegean Coasts - Yolda Initiative](#)
6. [Birds and Biodiversity Study in the Ayvalık Islands - Ayvalık Education Cooperative](#)
7. [Let Gediz Delta Live! - Doga](#)
8. [Act4 Species - Social Climate Association](#)
9. [Conservation of Kavakderesi, Bodrum - Bodrum Classical Music Organisation](#)
10. [Kavakderesi Basin - Bodrum Classical Music Association](#)
11. [Protection of Bodrum seagrass - SAD-AFAG Underwater Research Association.](#)
12. [Monitoring of Invasive Alien Species and Citizen Participation - Natural Balance Association](#)
13. [Climate Resistant and Sustainable Bee Ranges - Climate Research Association](#)
14. [Post-fire Restoration Support to Wildlife - NATURA](#)
15. [Women's Garden - Marmaris Ecological Agricultural Development](#)
16. [Safeguarding the Giant Deep Sea Guardians - Marine Mammals Research Association \(DMAD\).](#)
17. [Plastic Pollution Awareness in Konyaaltı And Serik Public Beaches - Ecological Research Society \(EKAD\).](#)
18. [Cliffs are our home - Antalya Underwater Society - ANTSAD](#)
19. [Turtles Friendly Side-Manavgat River Shoreline - DEKAFOK](#)



OUR WORK

CONSERVATION OF THE KAVAKDERESI RIVER

BodrumLokal & Bodrum Classical Music Association

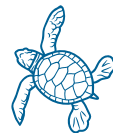
The Kavakderesi River, vital for local villages and biodiversity, is threatened by tourism-driven development, causing water shortages.

This project produced a 20 minute documentary and local festival to raise awareness and engage the community in conservation, with ongoing support for traditional agriculture.



SEATURTLE SHORELINE

DEKAFOK



Turkey's Manavgat coastline is a vital habitat for loggerhead and green sea turtles who face threats from coastal development, tourism, pollution and predators. This project analyses nesting and hatching rates of these turtles to inform conservation efforts; focusing on research-based beach management and creating safe nesting sites while enhancing marine awareness among locals and visitors with a short film.

AYVALIK ISLANDS BIRD STUDY

BBOM-Ayvalik

The Ayvalik Islands Nature Park, a vital area for seabird conservation in Turkey, lacks systematic studies on breeding/migratory birds in marine and island ecosystems. This project aims to investigate biodiversity, assess threats, and raise awareness among students, with a focus on bird research to better inform conservation efforts and strengthen NGO and stakeholder capacity.



CLIFFS ARE OUR HOME

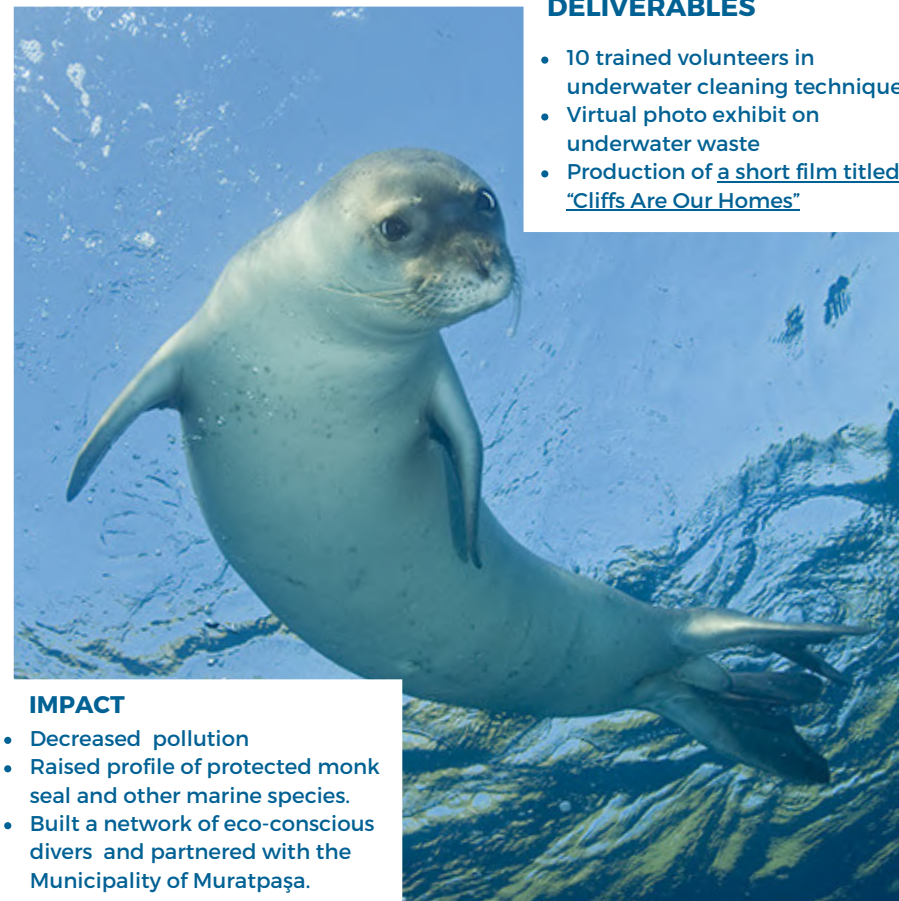
Antalya Underwater Society – ANTSAD



The cliffs on the Antalya Falez Coastal Band are one of the four habitats in Turkey inhabited by the critically endangered Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*). Reaching up to 35 metres in height, the cliffs are a popular fishing and tourist attraction, which inevitably draws high levels of plastic and fish gear pollution, posing a serious threat to the seals.

DELIVERABLES

- 10 trained volunteers in underwater cleaning techniques
- Virtual photo exhibit on underwater waste
- Production of a short film titled "Cliffs Are Our Homes"

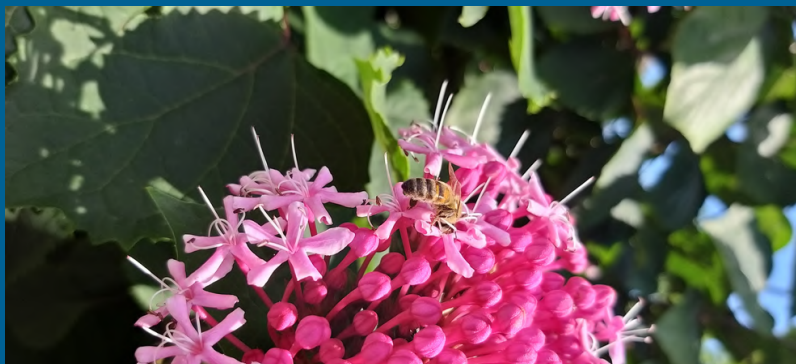


IMPACT

- Decreased pollution
- Raised profile of protected monk seal and other marine species.
- Built a network of eco-conscious divers and partnered with the Municipality of Muratpaşa.

CLIMATE RESISTANT AND SUSTAINABLE BEE RANGES

Climate Research Association



Following the forest fires and the ongoing threat of climate change, the beekeepers of Marmaris have been forced to migrate away from the area to maintain their livelihoods, with 30% reporting quitting beekeeping. In addition, the forest fires severely damaged the health and ecology of local biodiversity, which in turn impacted local livelihoods and incomes.

- The Bee Pastures Pilot Application aims to preserve beekeeping activities in the fire-affected area of Osmaniye-Orhaniye-Bayir-Turgut (Marmaris) by restoring pollinator-friendly habitats.
- This project will create a local bee pasture map, propose a selection of plants to enhance bee activity, and create a plan to engage beekeepers.
- Beekeeper interviews and focus groups revealed the need for more involvement from women and young people and the need for new sources of income. The project identified new marketing and commercial distribution routes, as well as diversified apiculture products such as herbal extracts.
- This project also created an Ecosystem and Climate Impact model to predict future climatic trends.

GÖKÇEADA SALT LAKE WETLAND

Water Ecosystems Conservation Association

Gökçeada, Turkey's largest island in the Aegean Sea, faces growing anthropogenic pressures which threaten its biodiversity and water quality. Despite an action plan initiated in 2021, new hotels, water wells, and quarries have continued to emerge. This project engages local community members and tourists in scientific monitoring to emphasise the significance of biodiversity through on-site observations and seminars aimed at raising awareness about Gökçeada's environment, especially its wetland and species, which are critical for the island's ecosystem.

OUTPUTS

- 3-day wetland workshop.
- [Brief video](#) on wetland threats and its biological importance.
- Two seminars for 50 farmers and environmental education for 320 children.



IMPACT

- Building a bird-watching tower near the wetland area is underway.
- An environmental awareness survey for Gökçeada is ongoing; results pending.

SAFEGUARDING GIANT DEEP SEA GUARDIANS

DMAD-Marine Mammals Research Association

Turkish waters are home to 12 species of cetaceans, including fin whales, sperm whales; bottlenose, common and striped dolphins, and harbour porpoises.

Despite being officially protected by the law, these marine mammals still face many threats to their survival. The cetaceans of the Eastern Mediterranean Sea have been understudied compared to other regions, and local knowledge regarding the rich marine biodiversity of the area is scarce.

Outputs

- Production of a film surveying whale and dolphin populations around the Kas region.
- Scientific and citizen science observations identified sperm whales, common dolphins, and striped dolphins.
- Species and photo identification workshops for students and young researchers were organised. School children were also engaged through a drawing competition.
- Questionnaires were handed out to community members to understand local knowledge about marine biodiversity. Overall, results showed a lack of awareness of the marine world and the need for its conservation.

This project significantly increased the awareness about dolphins and whales in Turkey, particularly among the public. The association's presence on social media platforms was key to achieve this.

The grantee will continue scientific studies, create new documentaries, conduct educational activities, and provide work opportunities for young and female research students in 2024..



POST-FIRE RESTORATION SUPPORT TO WILDLIFE

Wildfires are increasing globally due to warmer and drier conditions as a direct consequence of climate change. In July and August 2021, more than two hundred wildfires burnt 1,700 square kilometres of forest in Turkey's Mediterranean Region in the worst-ever wildfire season in the country's history. Exactly one year later, in 2022, the region caught fire again.



NATURA – Nature and Culture Association

This project assessed wildlife in the Marmaris region after the mega fires of 2021 and 2022, identifying regeneration actions for the Marmaris-Bördübet Wildlife Development Area. The sweetgum forests of the Marmaris-Bördübet Wildlife Development Area (YHGS) are home to the Brown Bear (*Ursus arctos*), Caracal (*Caracal caracal*), and Otter (*Lutra lutra*). Following the assessment, an Ecological Restoration Process will be created, involving public institutions and organisations in decision-making.

OUTPUTS

- The initial phase of the Ecological Restoration Process involves carrying out wildlife surveys and post-fire ecosystem monitoring which will provide a pioneering example.
- It also aims to raise awareness about the importance of tailored ecological restoration and forest management practices that prioritise the specific needs of affected ecosystems.
- Data was collected in burnt and unburnt areas to assess mega fire impact on local wildlife.
- Photo-trap stations placed in various locations within both burnt and unburnt areas, reveal Brown Bears seeking refuge in unburnt areas and Caracal sightings in unburnt areas.



As the Chair of TCEF, I am inspired by the resilience of our coastal ecosystems and I believe in the profound impact of community-led initiatives. With every drop of commitment and every ripple of action, we are writing a story of conservation, a legacy that echoes through generations. Let our commitment be the driving force that sustains this precious jewel of nature, the Turquoise Coast."

CAN KOSEOGLU, CHAIR, TURQUOISE COAST ENVIRONMENT FUND

WHAT'S NEXT

Our priority is to increase the amount of funding available for local, tangible, nature-based solutions by inspiring more people and organisations to get involved.

We aim to encourage more grassroots regenerative projects to start-up or scale-up, by providing mentoring, expertise, connections and vital financial support.

Our forthcoming focus entails expanding the pool of funding accessible for grassroots nature-based solutions in Turkey, igniting greater participation from individuals and enterprises.

Your support would enable us to seed even more nature-based solutions; while showcasing project successes that ignite hope and wider action, and accelerate systemic change.

OUR TEAM

Being part of Conservation Collective allows us to share world-class knowledge and expertise across the network.



Dr. Ayşegül Çil
Executive Director



Can Koseoglu
Chair



Ben Goldsmith
Steering Committee



Ergem Senyuva Tohumcu
Steering Committee



Shirley Au
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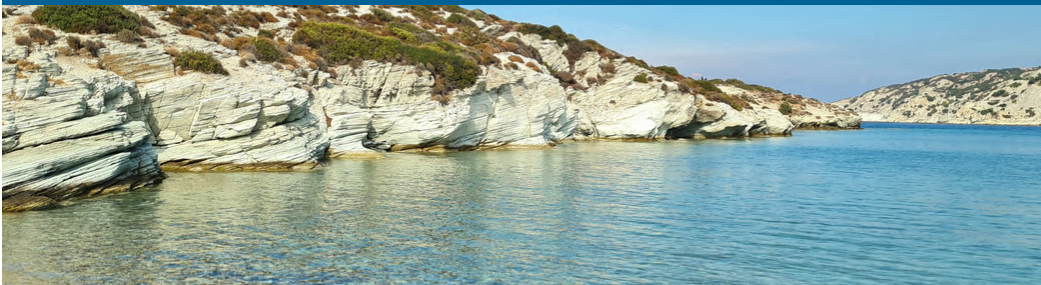
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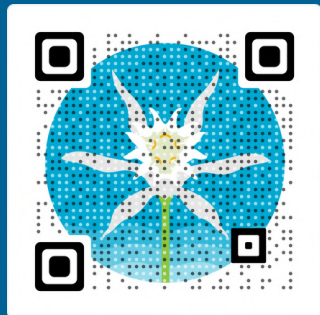
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