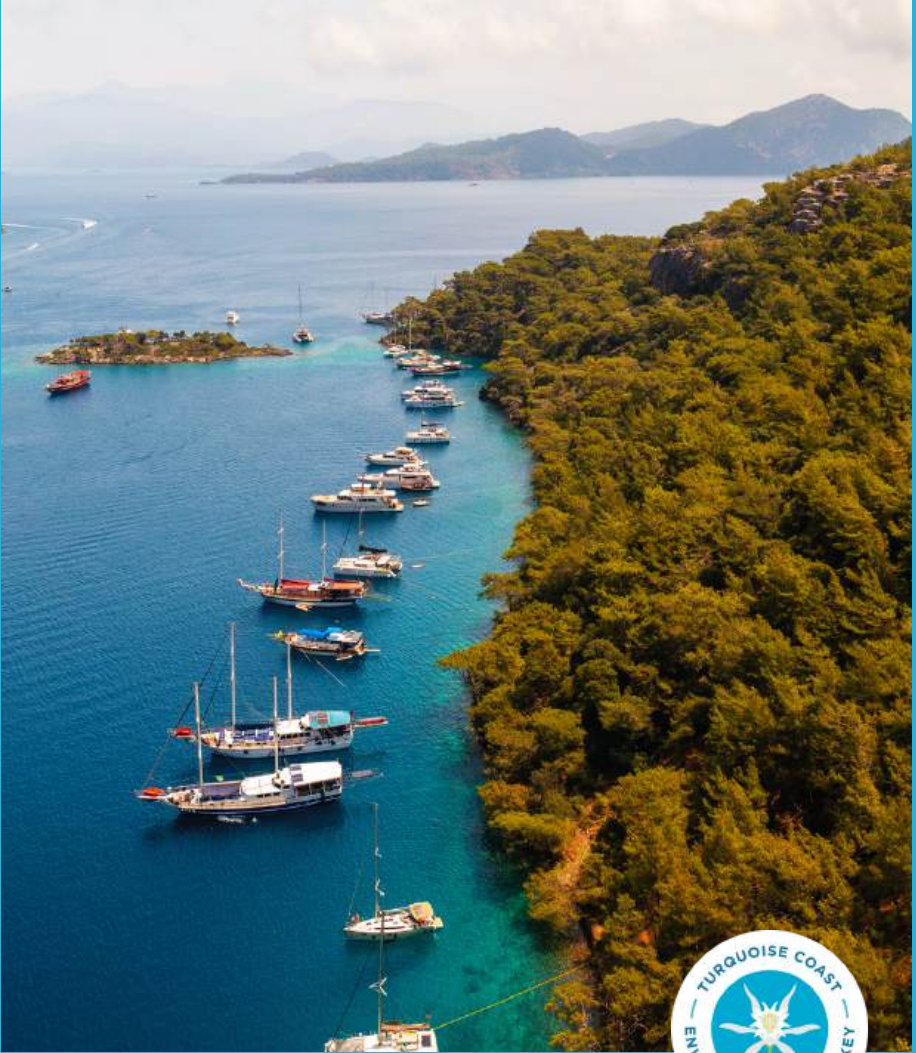


# TURQUOISE COAST ENVIRONMENT FUND



**SUMMER 2024 REVIEW**



“

**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 of Conservation Collective

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**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.**

## OUR VISION

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

TCEF was established in 2022 to empower 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.

## 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 Türkiye'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 Türkiye, united in boosting the work of local environmental champions.



# 2022 – 2024

AT A GLANCE



PROJECTS

**31**



TOTAL AMOUNT RAISED

**€326,000**

THROUGH ITS GRANT  
PARTNERS, TCEF IS SUPPORTING:



**SUSTAINABLE FOOD  
SYSTEMS**



**EMPOWERMENT OF LOCAL  
NGOS**



**BIODIVERSITY AND  
ECOSYSTEM SERVICES**

# TCEF'S AREAS OF INTEREST

## 1 Sustainable food systems



We fund projects with a holistic approach including farm to fork strategies, agroecology, and small scale artisanal fisheries. We look for projects promoting successful socio-economic practices that lead to positive outcomes for our communities and ecosystems.

## 2 Empowerment of local NGOs



We empower local groups and champions, providing funds to support them with advocacy, education, networking, knowledge and data sharing, to fully realise their potential in delivering impactful work to protect and restore nature.

## 3 Biodiversity and ecosystem services



We fund projects addressing marine, coastal and terrestrial conservation. 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.





## LET GEDIZ DELTA LIVE!

*Grantee: Doga Association  
December 2022 - August 2023  
Amount Awarded: € 9,300*

The Gediz Delta, located in western Türkiye, is a vital wetland area renowned for its rich biodiversity and ecological significance. It serves as a crucial habitat for numerous migratory and other bird species, and supports diverse flora and fauna unique to its wetland environment.

### OUTCOMES

Educational sessions were conducted in five schools around the Gediz Delta, reaching 521 students and 22 teachers to raise awareness about delta ecosystems.

A [documentary film](#) highlighting Gediz Delta's biodiversity, was produced, and featured prominently in a community meeting attended by 100 stakeholders.

Three bird-watching tours of the delta were organised for 136 participants, highlighting conservation efforts.



**"WITH THIS GRANT, WE ORGANIZED COMMUNITY AND DECISION-MAKER GATHERINGS THAT WE COULDN'T ALLOCATE RESOURCES FOR UNTIL NOW. THE SUCCESS OF THE FIRST MEETINGS BOOSTED ENTHUSIASM AND INCREASED PARTICIPATION IN OUR EVENTS".**

BURÇIN YARAŞLI, PROJECT COORDINATOR





## BIRDS AND BIODIVERSITY OF AYVALIK ISLAND

*Grantee: Ayvalık Another School is Possible Association  
September 2023 - September 2024  
Amount Awarded: € 7,500*

Ayvalık Islands Nature Park is a Key Biodiversity Area in Türkiye, consisting mainly of island and marine habitats, critical for seabirds. However, the lack of systematic research into breeding migratory birds weakens nature conservation and area protection efforts, making it difficult for NGOs and stakeholders to handle increasing usage pressures.

### OUTCOMES

BBOM Ayvalık is equipping students with dynamic Biology and Bird/Nature Observation Training, empowering the next generation to understand and protect biodiversity. 73 bird species were observed across five islands, resulting in more than 650 bird records collected in a week.

So far, 143 enthusiastic students and five teachers have participated in engaging face-to-face training sessions.





## SEAGRASS CONSERVATION

*Grantee: Underwater Research Association  
September 2023 - September 2024  
Amount Awarded: € 7,300*

Seagrass (Posidonia) is an ecologically important ecosystem with a very high carbon sequestration capacity. The support Project Posidonia received from TCEF in Bodrum, enabled the project to receive additional funding from UNDP and the French Institute. By focusing on community engagement, it aims to conserve seagrass meadows and protect marine wildlife.


### OUTCOMES

So far, more than 150 aerial surveys have been completed, mapping around 100 km<sup>2</sup> of coastal areas in the peninsula.

The Posidonia panel discussions have engaged five different associations including international guests from France. The team is seeking collaborative efforts to pursue legal action against the removal of Posidonia seagrass from seabeds.



**PROJECT POSIDONIA HAS CREATED TWO VIBRANT AND INFORMATIVE BOOKLETS ON SEAGRASS, FEATURING CAPTIVATING ILLUSTRATIONS TO ENGAGE AND EDUCATE THE COMMUNITY.**

A scenic view of a rocky coastline. In the foreground, there is a rocky beach with many smooth, dark stones. The water is clear and shallow, revealing the rocks beneath. In the background, there are steep, rocky cliffs under a clear blue sky. The overall scene is bright and natural.

**“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.”**

**Can Koseoglu**  
Chair of TCEF





## INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES IN DATÇA-BOZBURUN

Grantee: Nature Balance Association  
September 2023 - April 2024  
Amount Awarded: € 7,300

Invasive Alien Species (IAS) are a leading cause of the loss of marine biodiversity in Türkiye and pose a significant threat to the marine ecosystem, human health, welfare, and the economy. This project has identified the most common invasive alien species in the region as the pufferfish and the lionfish.

### OUTCOMES

35 out of 53 invasive alien species have been identified in Datça-Bozburun SEPA marine area including pufferfish, lionfish, long-spined sea urchin, cone fish, and sea grape.

Over 100 people engaged with data collection including fisheries cooperatives, locals, fishermen and diving clubs. The closing meeting was attended by 20 representatives including local decision-makers and civil society organisations.



**"BASED ON THIS DATA, TRAINING BOAT OWNERS AND STAFF OF 13 MARINAS ARE PLANNED TO ADDRESS MARINE INVASIVE SPECIES AND IMPLEMENT BIOSECURITY MEASURES."**

GUNER ERGUN, PROJECT COORDINATOR





## PLASTIC FREE SHORES

*Grantee: Ecological Research Association  
May 2024 – December 2024  
Amount Awarded: € 29,200*

Plastic pollution poses a grave concern in Türkiye, evident through the prevalent sight of discarded plastic waste on our beaches and in the natural environment. There is an urgent need to address plastic pollution along the coastlines, as indicator areas for both land-based and marine-based pollution.

### OUTCOMES

Three major cleanups have resulted in the removal of approximately 50.76 kg of plastic and 66 liters of cigarette ends from the environment.

EKAD engaged with beach visitors through information stands, educational sessions and games, reaching 1200 individuals and 30 businesses in the area.

The media coverage by over 25 media agencies has amplified the message, inspiring more people to reduce their plastic consumption.





## LOCAL STEWARDSHIP FOR KAVAKDERESI RIVER

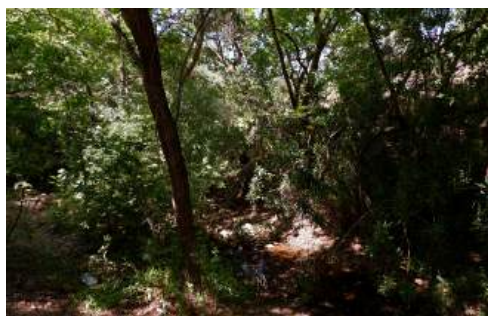
*Grantee: Bodrum Classic Music Association  
September 2023 -September 2024  
Amount Awarded: € 6,800*

Kavakderesi is a crucial natural area in the popular tourist destination of Bodrum. This project aims to preserve Kavakderesi river, the last free flowing river in the peninsula, for the future, by collaborating with the local community, enabling them to continue with traditional livelihoods, whilst also benefitting from sustainable water management.

### OUTCOMES

A community panel was held on 10 June, focusing on strategies for sustainable water use and enabling the local community to participate in governance and decision-making processes to safeguard the area's natural resources. The next steps include delivering the panel results to the municipality through one-on-one meetings.

The team produced a documentary on water scarcity in the Bodrum Peninsula, featuring insights from local residents and experts. It can be watched [here](#).





## COMMUNITY GARDENS OF MARMARIS

Grantee: Marmaris Ecological Agricultural Development Cooperative  
 September 2023 - November 2024  
 Amount Awarded: € 7,400

Türkiye's 2021 mega wildfires in the Marmaris region transformed lush green forests into barren hills, severely impacting beekeeping activities and agricultural development. This project aims to implement a sustainable production model to restore natural habitats and promote local agricultural development using best practice.

### OUTCOMES

60 students from Hisarönü school participated in a beekeeping workshop, where they learnt about bee biology and their indispensable role in pollination.

Seedlings were successfully planted in the gardens of two local farmers. The team chose bee-friendly plants like Anatolian and Medicinal Sage.

Training was also carried out on Medicinal Aromatic Plants, adding another layer of expertise and enthusiasm.





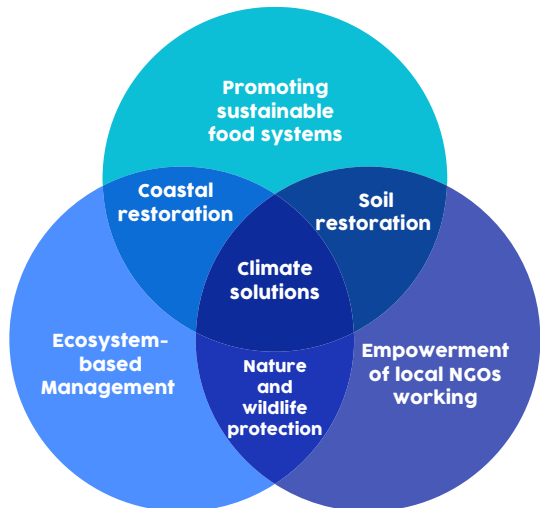
# COASTAL CONSERVATION IN EARTHQUAKE REGION

On February 6, 2023, a catastrophic 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck southern Türkiye, affecting 11 provinces and resulting in more than 50,000 fatalities. The devastation went beyond immediate human and structural damage, causing severe environmental challenges. Coastal communities in the affected areas are dealing with major geological challenges, including landslides and disturbances to coastal ecosystems.

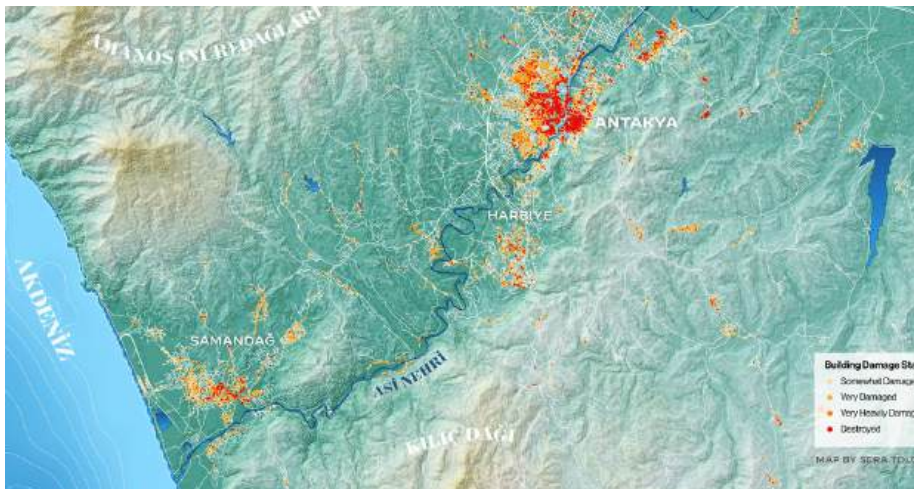
This grant programme is made possible through a collaboration between TCEF, Turkish Philanthropy Funds, and Turkey Mozaik Foundation. The programme aims to restore nature, particularly in the areas of Türkiye that were affected by the February 2023 earthquakes in Hatay, Adana, and Mersin. The focus is on supporting projects for coastal and marine landscape restoration to mitigate the environmental impact of earthquakes. These projects are crucial for the affected communities as they recover from the disaster.

We are supporting a total of **seven projects** with a grant of **€60,480** to address urgent environmental challenges in Hatay, Adana, and Mersin.

**This specific grant programme focuses on seven critical areas:**







## ASI RIVER AND DELTA ENVIRONMENTAL VISION PLAN

Grantee: Antakya Environmental Protection Association  
 May 2024 - March 2025  
 Amount Awarded: € 8,491

The Asi River Delta and Samandağ coastline are vital ecological zones in Antakya, facing significant environmental threats exacerbated by the aftermath of the earthquake. Development and construction activities continue, disregarding the city's geological and ecological characteristics, leading to illegal dumping of rubble in crucial natural areas such as the Milyha Wetland and Samandağ dunes.

### OUTCOMES

The project's objective is to bring together experts, academics, planners, and activists to comprehensively document environmental problems using verbal accounts and satellite imagery to understand changes before and after the earthquake. This includes mapping the spread of quarries, rubble dumping on wetlands, and construction along the coastline. This vision plan was inspired by disaster response efforts in New York, New Jersey, and the Gulf region post-hurricanes. Given the lack of an environmental plan for Antakya, our initiative seeks to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive, community-driven plan to minimize disaster risks and promote public health and safety. The team will also create short videos to showcase the ecology of the Asi River through local interviews. These videos will be used to promote the vision plan and raise awareness through a social media campaign.



## STRENGTHENING WATER MANAGEMENT AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

Grantee: Samandağ District Center and Neighbourhoods Agricultural Development Cooperative  
May 2024 - December 2024  
Amount Awarded: € 10,000

Ineffective water management in the Hatay region is causing uneven water use, harming agricultural sustainability, and degrading ecosystem health. Declining biodiversity and soil erosion are worsening these issues, leading to habitat loss and reduced ecosystem services. To address these challenges, the project focuses on implementing sustainable water management practices and enhancing biodiversity through afforestation.

### OUTCOMES

This project aims to improve water use efficiency, protect local species, and combat soil erosion, ultimately strengthening ecosystem resilience and reducing environmental impact.

Specific actions include installing four rainwater harvesting tanks, creating a biological pond, tree planting, and providing water management training for 50 farmers. The [Anatolian Pastures](#) team oversees the project, which aims to address water resource management deficiencies and strengthen local ecosystems.

# NEWS & UPDATES

CLICK TO READ MORE ABOUT OUR PROJECTS



TCEF 2022-2023 Annual Review



Nature and Culture Aegean Sea Report



Sustainable Adventure from Marmara to Mediterranean



Marmaris Ecological Restoration Guide



Gediz Wetland's Informative Booklet



Cetacean Species Threat Assessment Report

CLICK TO WATCH PROJECT VIDEOS



Dekafok's Success Story in Manavgat Shoreline



What it Takes to Find a Sperm Whale in Turkey



Safeguarding Kavakderesi Bodrum's Vital River



Izmir Gediz Wetland: A Thousand Years of Life



Disappearing Wetlands: Gökçeada's Salt Lake



Antalya's Cliff are Our Home

# OUR TEAM

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



**Didem Karagence**  
Programme  
Assistant



**Can Koseoglu**  
Chair



**Ergem Senyuva Tohumcu**  
Steering Committee



**Tijen Eren**  
Steering Committee



**Kıvılcım P. Kocabiyık**  
Steering Committee



**Secil Kınay Yılmaz**  
Steering Committee



**Ben Goldsmith**  
Conservation Collective



**Jade Brudenell**  
Conservation Collective



**Shirley Au**  
Steering Committee



**Senay Ataselim  
Yilmaz**  
Steering Committee



**Onur Eren**  
Steering Committee



# OUR NETWORK



# OUR PARTNERS



# WHAT'S NEXT

Our priority is to increase the amount of funding available for local, tangible solutions by inspiring more people & 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.

Your support would enable us to seed more projects, inspire more people and support more nation-wide solutions.

Nurture Türkiye's Nature.  
Join TCEF.

# THANK YOU

To all our donors and supporters.  
We couldn't have done it  
without your generous support.



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