

Co-Management for TRNC Fisheries

Workshop Report



The Cyprus Bycatch Project is part of a Mediterranean-wide project funded by the MAVA foundation. Its aim is to understand bycatch of vulnerable species in Cyprus fisheries, and by 2022, reduce annual mortalities. In 2018 to 2019 the project's focus has been on species distribution studies and onboard observation in fisheries, while starting to test some sea turtle and dolphin bycatch reduction technologies with fishermen. In 2020-2022, the focus will be on reducing bycatch. This could be through technology, diversification of fishing methods or through sustainable fisheries management approaches.

This workshop is organized as a part of Cyprus Bycatch Project, with initiative of Society for the Protection of Turtles (SPOT) in collaboration with the constitutions with related logos below.















Report prepared by

Dr. Damla Beton
Dr. Robin Snape
Society for the Protection of Turtles (SPOT)
Society for the Protection of Turtles (SPOT)

Workshop Organisation Committee

Head of Committee

Dr. Robin Snape Society for the Protection of Turtles (SPOT)

Members of Committee (alphabetical order)

Dr. Burak Ali Çiçek Eastern Mediterranean University Underwater Research and Imaging Center

Dr. Damla Beton Society for the Protection of Turtles (SPOT)
Çiğdem Çağlar Society for the Protection of Turtles (SPOT)

Hasan Deniz Akbora Eastern Mediterranean University Underwater Research and Imaging Center

Meryem Özkan Society for the Protection of Turtles (SPOT)
Şerife Ebeler Society for the Protection of Turtles (SPOT)
Tahir Aköz Altınkaya Society for the Protection of Turtles (SPOT)

Timuçin Dinçer WWF Turkey

KKTC Hayvancılık Dairesi TRNC Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Animal Husbandry

Moderators

Dr. Burak Ali Çiçek Eastern Mediterranean University Underwater Research and Imaging Center

Dr. Damla Beton Society for the Protection of Turtles (SPOT)

Timuçin Dinçer WWF Turkey

SWOT Analysis

Nafiz Güder WWF Turkey

Photographs

Photographs during the workshop were taken by İnanç Tekgüç, while Olkan Ergüler photographed the fisheries in the field.

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Introduction

Cyprus is a unique island with easy access to the sea at all sides. It is no surprise then that seafood is an important food source. Therefore, the fishers of the country not only provide valued food, but also play a vital role in the economy, especially in rural areas. However, increasing demand, decreasing numbers of fish through overfishing, invasive species and an increase in the occurrence of marine debris, raises concern about their sustainability. Many countries are undertaking research to devise precautions and techniques while improving their monitoring systems. But these actions are generally more focused on industrial fisheries.

In large industrial fleets, large numbers of fishers are employed on a small number of large vessels. The large vessels may work under a smaller-still number of corporations, which themselves may be part of an umbrella cooperative. Through top-down management, it is relatively easy to have onboard observers undertake research to monitor stocks and landing and to ensure compliance on a small number of large vessels, all of which are obliged to be tracked by vessel monitoring systems that give real-time locations. However, they are considered much more heavily impacting on fish stocks, biodiversity and habitats than a small-scale fisheries (SSFs).

TRNC has not permitted industrial fisheries in its waters; therefore the TRNC fishery is purely a SSF. Perhaps, it is the only example of such a country in the whole Mediterranean. The absence of bottom-trawling has undoubtedly secured the prevalence of some marine habitats and a level of biodiversity which is not found in countries where such practices have been permitted.

In SSFs, the impact of individual vessels on stocks, biodiversity and habitats may be less. However, there are far fewer studies on SSFs, since there are so many vessels that it is very difficult to gather adequate data to report conclusively on their activities. SSFs are loosely structured with the captain of each vessel acting completely independently. In this scenario, securing compliance with regulations can be extremely difficult to achieve, so many SSFs operate on the assumption that as the size of boats is limited, the capacity of the fishery is also limited. The significant financial and organisational resources required to monitor, report on and manage SSFs, and the perceived (yet often underestimated or under-valued), low economic turnover of SSF, are often factors in the determination by governance, not to prioritise investment in SSFs management and improvement.

Society for the Protection of Turtles (SPOT) with the Animal Husbandry Department (TRNC Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources) work with Eastern Mediterranean

University Underwater Research and Screening Centre, to undertake research on fisheries and species living in our seas. These studies help to guide and improve the scientific foundation of the decisions made by the ministries where needed. We therefore support the government in its preparation of laws and constitutions, accounting for published data. Our overarching aim is to secure environmentally and economically sustainable fisheries. We also realise that in order to reach our sustainable fisheries goals, there must be a functional management plan consistent with the laws and constitutions. The functionality of such a management plan requires the stakeholders to work simultaneously within the management system. As our country develops, we need to update our existing systems and keep them up to date with those of the world. For SSF though, feasible management systems are really only emerging relatively recently and we should also aim to lead the way, as we have done in excluding the development of the industrialised sector, thus providing some protection to livelihoods and to the health of our seas.

Since 2009 SPOT have been engaged directly with TRNC fishers on issues such as bycatch of vulnerable species (sea turtles, monk seals, sharks, rays and seabirds) and dolphin (Tursiops truncatus) depredation. Currently we are engaged in the Cyprus Bycatch Project, a 2017 – 2022 project funded by the MAVA foundation. This islandwide project is part of a Mediterraneanwide programme coordinated with many international organisations, the aim of which is to understand and reduce bycatch of vulnerable species in Mediterranean fisheries. Through our continued research, and from continued anthropological research and discussions with TRNC small-scale fishers, it has become clear that a key driver of bycatch of vulnerable species is an insufficient level of management. Through joint studies it has long been known that, in the face of declining fish stocks, to maintain landings, TRNC fishers are adapting by increasing their capacity through the amount of net and hooks used. In turn, fish stocks continue to decline further, requiring still more fishing effort to

maintain landings. This vicious cycle is bad for the TRNC fishing economy, the fish resources that sustain it. This trajectory also points out that the bycatch of sea turtles, elasmobranchs, monk seals and other vulnerable species is already, or will become unsustainable. Therefore, through the Cyprus Bycatch Project, with the aim of mitigating bycatch of multi-taxa vulnerable species in the long-term, we decided to allocate some attention and funding to policy and advocacy to try to break this cycle, with a view to promoting management in at least one pilot area.

In 2019 we were invited by WWF Turkey to attend a workshop on small-scale fisheries co-management. In its broadest sense, co-management is a method for fisheries management whereby stakeholder groups (typically four groups: government, fisher representatives, researchers and conservationists) form a management committee, with each stakeholder group having democratic power in the decision management processes and well-defined managerial responsibilities. Not entirely bottom-up and not entirely top-down and adaptable for specific contexts. We were impressed with examples of SSF co-management, with some apparent successes in Spain and Turkey, so we reached out to WWF Turkey for support and Eastern Mediterranean University, also pledged to host and help organise the event.

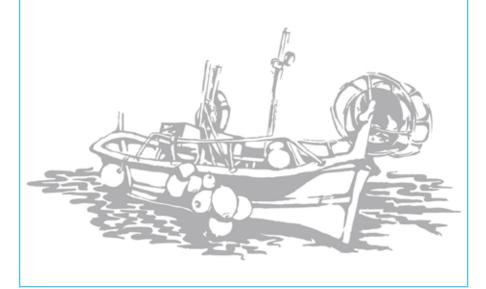
Together with TRNC Agriculture and Natural Resources Ministry, government officers, fishers and other stakeholder groups, experts and consultants from Turkey and UK, we discussed how to improve the existing fishery management system. All the stakeholders related to fishing in TRNC came together for this purpose. The workshop was held on Thursday and Friday 21 and 22 November 2019.

This report presents the outcome of the subjects that were discussed, and the resulting decisions made.



CO-MANAGEMENT FOR TRNC FISHERIES

21-22 November 2019 Mustafa Afşin Ersoy Hall, EMU



Attendance

A total of 79 people attended the two-day workshop from 36 different organisations. Day one and day two were attended by 66 people from 35 organisations and 37 people from 23 organisations respectively.

The workshop began with a welcome talk from Kutlay Keço, the head of SPOT (App. 1). The Agriculture and Forest Ministry officer of Mersin region in Turkey, Yiğit Alaşehir, made a talk on behalf of his ministry and later Eastern Mediterranean University Rector Prof. Dr. Necdet Osam and TRNC Agriculture and Natural Resources Minister Mr. Dursun Oğuz also made plenary speeches.



Kutlay Keço

Head of Society for the Protection of Turtles (SPOT)



Yiğit Alaşehir

Agriculture and Forest Ministry officer of Mersin region in Turkey



Prof. Dr. Necdet Osam

Eastern Mediterranean University Rector



Dursun Oğuz

TRNC Agriculture and Natural Resources Minister



Presentations (21 November 2019)

During the morning session of day one, talks were delivered on SSF and co-management concepts with examples from overseas. The aim of this part was to give an idea to the attendees about the co-management concept, the main topic and the aim of this workshop.

Prof. Dr. Hüseyin Özbilgin of Mersin University (Turkey) led first with a talk on "Fishers' role in Sustainable Fisheries". During his talk, he underlined that the fisheries sustainability can only be achieved with the fishers' will and support.



Structure, organisation, capacity and best examples.". He told the audience how the fishermen became economically developed through establishment of cooperatives, and how the pressure on the fish stocks has been reduced by their steps. In his talk Mr Özkaya said that such cooperatives should be managed with transparency and thereby have a trustworthy structure, in order to be successful. He said that, should the fishers establish good cooperatives then they will reap the benefits. He also talked about subsidies, for example that some fishers are exempt from fuel tax in some parts of Turkey, and commended the efforts

of the TRNC Dept. for Animal Husbandry to compensate fishers for loss of earnings, and encourage extraction of invasive pufferfish by rewarding fishers for pufferfish tails.

Afterwards, the Turkish Agriculture and Forest Ministry, Fisheries and Water Products Directorate, Mersin Branch Manager Mr. Yiğit Alaşehir gave a speech about "The Public Structuring of the Fishing Industry and Small Scale Fisheries in Turkey". He informed us of the current situation in Turkey.

In the afternoon session of day 1, presentations turned to "The current situation in TRNC: Where are we and where are we going?" with presentations by local stakeholders. Our aim was to evaluate TRNC fisheries with all stakeholders.

Following that, Prof. Dr. Brendan Godley from University of Exeter (United Kingdom) gave his talk. He gave examples of small-scale fisheries collaboration from all around the world, including in

TRNC, in his presentation entitled "The global small-scales fisheries management challenge". He drew attention to the problems of fish stock declines occurring globally and gave examples of sustainable fisheries initiatives taken place parallel to turtle conservation projects that he is involved in. He drew attention to the project run by SPOT in Northern Cyprus, fruitful relationships established with published results.

WWF Turkey Fisheries Expert Mr. Timuçin Dinçer summarized steps WWF is taking in Turkey to make fisheries more sustainable through collaborations with small-scale fishers, with his presentation entitled "Current work of WWF in Mediterranean SSF co-management".

T.C. Water Production Cooperatives, Central Union General Director Mr. Ramazan Özkaya then presented "SSF Cooperatives in Turkey.

Firstly Mr. Hakan Bener, Head of the Iskele Cooperative, started the talks, describing the present state of TRNC fisheries, what action is needed and raising the shortcomings on behalf of the TRNC fishers. He said that illegal and unregulated fishing





cannot currently be controlled. He said that even though there are many registered fishers, the number of fishers regularly going out fishing from the harbours is actually very low. He said that they have tried developing a cooperative system before, but faced difficulties in its application, so it was not successful. He shared the opinion that cooperative systems may be applicable, if the coops could benefit from improved fishing port facilities for example.

Then Mr. Mustafa Tumburi, TRNC Animal Husbandry Department Water Production Expert described the current management mechanism, gave some information about ongoing constitution preparations and summarised updates in his speech entitled "TRNC fisheries policy development, legal design and implementation.". He stated that Northern Cyprus has a coastline of 396 km and this is approximately 50.6% of total island coast. He said that there are a total of 14 fishing port facilities in TRNC, 384 professional fishers registered and around 200 boats that are not registered, apart from those, there are 1500 amateur fishers. He said that among the current registered professional fishers, 40% do it as a profession, 30% do it as a secondary job and 30% do it just for the love of the sea.

Mr. Erhan Keser, Head of the TRNC Hunting Federation, which has some roles in policing hunting laws including within the scope of marine fisheries, made a speech about "The development of AVKOR, it's role in fisheries inspection: successes, shortcomings and challenges.". He gave examples of the checks AVKOR undertake during his talk. He also discussed how AVKOR is struggling with an insufficient number of rangers and how this limits them, therefore they are not as active in checks in marine fisheries as they would like to be, due to the insufficient budget.

Finally, Dr. Burak Ali Çiçek, lecturer in Eastern Mediterranean University Faculty of Arts and Sciences and head of the Underwater Research and Screening Centre, gave a talk entitled "The role of Marine Protected Areas in sustainable fisheries management. MPAs in TRNC and their management plans.". He referred to the research they have undertaken and their importance in forming the balance in protection/exploitation of the MPAs. He discussed the Natura 2000 management plans which have never been implemented in the marine realm and the very limited number of closed areas in TRNC, few of which are implemented. He also discussed examples in Turkey and discussed fisheries management projects and examples which he has been involved with there.







Evaluation: SWOT Analysis

Through day one discussions were within the general topics presented in the talks and were moderated by a panel. All participants were given ample opportunity to speak and the questions posed by the audience were answered by the panel and presenters. The information and viewpoints were gathered in note form during the talks and collated in a SWOT analysis by WWF Turkey's senior advisor Nafiz Güder. This analysis was presented at the end of the day.

The summary of the SWOT analysis is presented below:

Strengths

Weaknesses

- Government is not providing enough economical support to fishers (Malta or Sicily example)
- Fishers do not want the next generations to become
- The size/amount of fish resources is unknown (data
- The need for education of fishers
- The off the unrecorded and illegal fishing activities in the sector are great Small scale fisheries are not mobile enough
- Small scale fisheries are not sufficiently involved in decision making processes
- Slow reaction to invasive species
- The number and experience of fisheries supervision staff is not enough
- Economical support is being provided to people who are not actually fishing but are registered as fishers.
- Regulation base has been on hold for the past 8 years – i.e. no updates to regulations
- The decision maker does not recognise the fishers

Opportunities

- Fishing sector is providing 4-5 times more employment than the number of fishers in the sea
- The most reliable and up to date data can be collected by the fishers
- The stakeholders to be involved in management: More information, ownership - may result in better
- compliance to regulations
 Our small-scale fisheries are more sustainable (compared to large scale)
- New income potential by promoting and marketing the new invasive species
- WWF Mediterranean Basin research and other good examples of co-management
- WWF protection of coastal communities initiative at global scale – Mediterranean, one of the 6 pilot seas
- There is no industrial fishing pressure in TRNC waters
- The opportunity to collaborate with Turkey fishing organisations
- Availability of new technologies for monitoring

Threats

Problems

- Fishing capacity in global scale is 2.5 times more (250%) than the target fish capacity
- The size of the fish caught is getting smaller
- Centralized management is being applied to the fishery without success
- The fisher's need for financial support
- The unfair competition of amateur fishers and divers (they are illegally selling to the market)
- Illegal hunting/fishing (Professional fishers may also fish illegally as well as amateurs)
- The harm done by invasive species in TRNC waters to commercial species
- Fishers equipment (eg. fishfinders) are old (moscan afford high capacity devices therefore, they cannot over-fish)
- Occupational hazards/hazardous workplace
- The inspection and control mechanism is not efficient
- Lack of structured representation for professional fishers



Suggestions

- Co-management mode
- The fishers to organise in order to represent themselves
- Fishers to take more responsibility with the authority
- The key prerequisite in marine turtle conservation: collaboration with fishers should continue
- Promote collaboration of scientists and fishers
- Build trust-based relationship between administration officers and fishers
- Fishers should capitalise on non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- Alternative livelihoods for fishers pesca-tourish opportunities
- There should be central cooperation
- Cooperatives should take responsibility and administrative regulation should give them authorisation
- Cooperatives should be able to plan on behalf of the ministry and provide data
- Get small scale fisheries fishing areas unde protection
- The necessary inspections to apply the regulations (at sea and in port)
- New regulations for quota and regional fishing must be published
- Register the unregistered fishing (increase in tax and support for small scale fishers)
- Financial support through fuel subsidies/discounts:
 supervision is processory for this to be fair.
- A commission/pressure group could be formed
- The support from the administrative authorities could be distributed through cooperatives
- MPAs should be declared
- There should be integrated management
- If the fishing will be banned for both the professiona and amateur; the professional fishers economic losses should be subsidised by financial support
- I he unions should work harder and the cooperatives should be strengthened in order to represent professional fishermen more efficiently
- Fishers stated that they would apply precautions to protect wildlife if it does not affect their income.
 For example: using LED lights on nets to reduce sea turtle bycatch
- Development of auto-control mechanisms (eg vessel monitoring systems etc.) to support the control
- Setting up a professional fisher support system (for example: there can be some conditions to be able to get discount for nets)
- Awareness raising on present laws and fish consumption (fish size and species etc.) for both the fishers and public

Open Session

An open session evaluation based on "Can co-management be used/applied for small-scale fisheries in TRNC?" was implemented at the end of day one. The following questions were posed:

Do you think that the laws and constitutions are enough?

Most of the participants stated that the laws and constitutions are not enough. Especially the fact that the constitution have been being prepared during the past 8 years is indicated as a failure. It was also stated that the deficiencies of this process cannot be completed or the documents cannot be updated easily due to the complexity of the process.

How can we proceed to prepare regulations?

There wasn't much comment on this topic.

How can both professional and amateur fishers be regulated effectively?

Generally it was told with examples that the control system was not working effectively due to positive discrimination towards personal relationships, benefits etc.. It was then explained how the inspections are unfair because of this. It was emphasized that the fishers are positive towards control only if it will be implemented fairly. AVKOR mentioned that they can achieve this in case there is more financial resources available. On the other hand, Head of Lapta, Alsancak, Karaoğlanoğlu Balıkçı Birliği told how they started conducting their own inspections in Lapta Harbour, which they were given the responsibility of. He especially mentioned their collaboration with the coast guards in tackling illegal hunting. He also mentioned the benefit of electronic door which only allows registered fishers in the harbour and the security cameras. He explained that these two applications made the control of the fisheries and fishers much easier. He said that this harbour is one of its kind in the island at the moment and therefore; they are happy to support any development on the inspection system.

How can regulations be implemented at customer level (Shops, restaurants etc.)?

It was indicated that the unfairness of the system starting from the sea is causing the whole system to collapse due to the reasons explained above. It was also emphasised that this situation continues to accelerate and increase in market and restaurant level.

Do you think you are involved in management or decision-making processes?

Many have agreed that Animal Husbandry Depratment recognise other stake-holders during decision making progress. However, especially the professional fishermen complained that their own nos does not inform them in general.

Group Work (22 November 2019)

On the morning of day two, we held group work to determine the right way to apply co-management for sustainable fisheries in TRNC. Group work was conducted at three round-tables with 12-13 people in each group. The groups were organised so that, as a minimum, there was at least one representative from each of the following groups at each table: TRNC Animal Husbandry Department, dive tourism, biologist, fisher cooperative, environmental NGO, TRNC Hunters Federation, external participant from Turkey.

Each group analysed and answered the following questions:

- Do we want co-management?
- Is it possible?
- If we implement co-management, how will the stakeholders be represented within the committee?

Results from every group were summarised and the general outcome is summarised as follows:

- All attendees wanted co-management.
- Most of the attendees believe that co-management is possible, but some of the representatives have concerns.
- As a result, it was decided that in order to implement co-management, there should be a "Co-management Committee of Fishing/Fisheries". It is indicated that there should be a legal framework underlining the establishment of this committee and its formal approval. It was stated that the committee should be structured to make rapid decisions where necessary and for this reason, should best meet at least once every six months. It was suggested that there should be extra meetings in emergencies (for example: on invasive species/illegal fishing). It was also mentioned that the decisions made by this committee should, where possible, be supported by scientific articles and data vetted and published in peer-reviewed journals. It was especially underlined that all decisions made by this committee must be in formal written format and signed off by all stakeholder representatives. Furthermore, the laws should state that this committee should be consulted in full before new laws are drafted.







Notes on Post-Workshop Communications:

Formation of Fisheries Co-Management Board/Council

Following the communications with some of the stakeholders after the workshop, we suggest that the following stakeholders need to be represented in the Fisheries Co-Management Board/Council:

 Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Department for Animal Husbandry

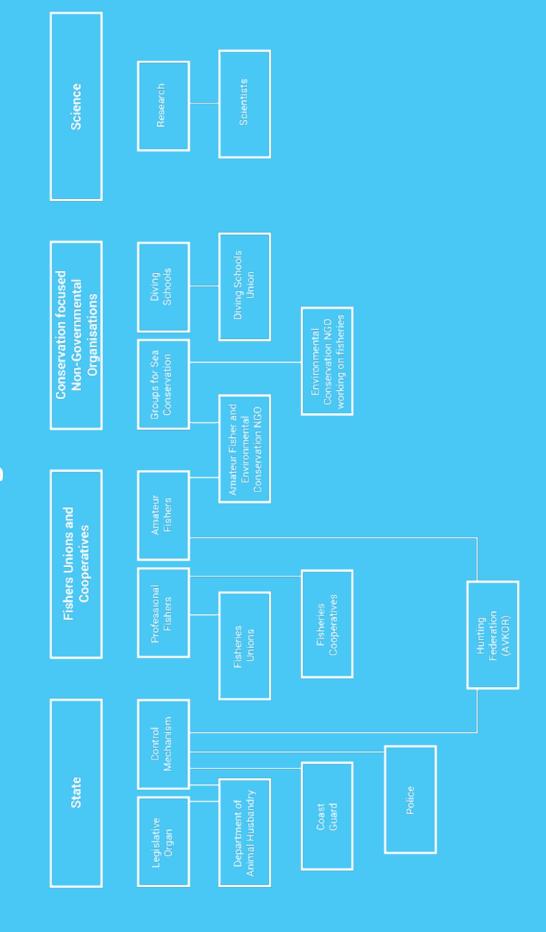
Personnel of the department who take charge in decision making on fisheries constitutions/laws and inspections of fisheries

- 2. Fisheries Cooperatives
- 3. Fisheries Unions
- 4. Hunting Federation (AVKOR)
- 5. Non-governmental Conservation Organisations
- 6. Diving Schools Union
- 7. Scientist
- 8. Police
- 9. Coast Guard

Most stake holders which attended the workshop agreed that they would be willing to approve the current draft constitution, which has not been signed for many years, on the condition that the co-management board described above is developed and legally legitimised. Once the co-management board becomes official, the stakeholders would then work together on reviewing and improving the accepted fisheries constitution.



Fisheries Co-Management Board/Council



Ek 1: Workshop Program

Day 1	
Morning	session

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09:00 - 09:20 09:20 - 10:00	Registration Plenary talks
	 Mr. Kutlay Keço - Chairman of the board, North Cyprus Society for Protection of Turtles Mr. Melih Er - Head of Department for Hunting and Control, Republic of Turkey Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, General Directorate of Fisheries and Aquaculture Prof. Dr. Necdet Osam - Eastern Mediterranean University Rector Mr. Dursun Oğuz - TRNC Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources
	Introducing Co-management for Small-Scale Fisheries
10:10	Prof. Dr. Huseyin Özbilgin - Fisheries Scientist; The Role of Fishermen in Sustainable Fisheries.
10:30	Prof. Brendan Godley - Professor of Conservation Science; The Global Small-Scale Fisheries Management
	Challenge.
10:50	Mr. Timuçin Dinçer - WWF Turkey Fisheries Officer; Current Work of WWF in Mediterranean SSF Co-management.
11:10 - 11:40	Coffee Break
11:40	Mr. Ramazan Özkaya - T.C. Water Production Cooperatives Central Union General Director; SSF cooperatives in Turkey. Structure, Organisation, Capacity, Best Examples.
12:00	Mr. Melih Er - Head of Department for Hunting and Control, Republic of Turkey Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, General Directorate of Fisheries and Aquaculture; Challenges in SSF Co-Management from the Perspective of Central Governance.
12:20 - 3:30	Lunch break
Afternoon session	
	Current situation in TRNC fisheries. Where Have We Been and Where Are We Going?
13:30	Mr. Kemal Atakan - Turkish Cypriot Fisheries Union Head; The History of TRNC Fisheries.
13:50	Mr. Mustafa Tumburi - TRNC Animal Husbandry Department Water Production Expert;

13:30 13:50 14:10	Mr. Kemal Atakan - Turkish Cypriot Fisheries Union Head; The History of TRNC Fisheries. Mr. Mustafa Tumburi - TRNC Animal Husbandry Department Water Production Expert; TRNC Fisheries Policy Development, Legal Design and Implementation. TRNC Coastguard Command - Role in TRNC Fisheries Management.
14:30 - 15:00	Coffee break
15:00	Mr. Erhan Keser - TRNC Hunting Federation Head; Development of AVKOR, Its Role in Fisheries Inspection: Successes, Shortcomings and Challenges.
15:30	Dr. Burak Ali Çiçek - Eastern Mediterranean University; The Role of Marine Protected Areas in Sustainable Fisheries Management. MPAs in TRNC and Their Management Plans.
16:00	Panel discussion and roundup: Is SSF Co-management for TRNC fisheries feasible?
17:00	Breakup

Day 2

Interactive open session
Group work aimed at identifying a road map to sustainable TRNC fisheries through co-management.
Field trip to Famagusta Harbour and lunch with fishermen
End of workshop

- 1. Amatör Balıkçı
- 2. Birdlife Cyprus
- 3. Cevre Koruma Daires
- 4. Cukurova Üniversitesi- Su Ürünler
- 5. Dalqıç
- 6. Deep Dive
- Dive Shack
- 8. Doğu Akdeniz Üniversites
- 9. Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi-Dalıs Grubu
- 10. Eğitim Görevlisi
- I1. Enalia Physis
- 12. Eski Tarım Bakan
- Foça Su Urünleri KOOP
- 14. Girne Amerikan Universites
- 15. KKTC Hayvancılık Dairesi
- 16. Iskele Boğaz Su Ürünleri Kooperatifi
- 17. Istanbul Teknik Universitesi KKTC
- 18. Kıbrıs Azerbaycan Diaspora Merkezi
- 19. KKTC Avcılık Federasyonu
- 20. Lapta Alsancak ve Karşıyaka Balıkçılar Bırlıgı
- 21. Mağusa Balıkçıık Birliğ
- 22. Mağusa Suriçi Derneği
- 23. Kuzev Kıbrıs Dalıs Merkezleri Derneğ
- 24. Mersin Universitesi Su Urünleri Fakültesi
- 25. MIC
- 26. Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi Öğrenci İşler
- 27. Profesvonel Balıkcı
- 28. Sportif Amatör Balıkçılık ve Denizleri Koruma Derneği
- 29. Kuzey Kıbrıs Kaplumbağaları Koruma Cemiyeti
- 30. Su Ürünleri Uzmanı
- 31. Türkiye Su Ürünleri Kooperatifi
- 32. Tarım ve Doğal Kaynaklar Bakanlığ
- 33. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Tarım ve Orman Bakanlığı
- 34. Taskent Doğa Park
- 35. Exeter Universitesi
- 36 WWF Tijrkiye/ Doğal Hayatı Koruma Vakfı









WE WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR APPRECIATION TO ALL FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS.

THANK YOU



















Nicosia, Gönyeli Office Address: Levent Apt, 1/1, Ulus Street, Gönyeli, Nicosia, North Cyprus Telefon: +90 548 886 8684

Alagadi Village

Address: 5 Barbaros Street, Alagadi Village, North Cyprus (Alagadi Turtle Beach)
Telephone: +90 533 8725350 (20 May - 30 September)

E-mail: info@cyprusturtles.org | **Facebook:** cyprusturtles | **Instagram:** spot_turtleproject | **Twitter:** spot_turtles