



## Conservation and Sustainable Management of Turkey's Steppe Ecosystems Project



### PRESS TRIP REPORT

May 2021

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## 1. AIM OF THE PRESS TRIP

A press trip program was organized for journalists within the scope of “Conservation and Sustainable Management of Turkey’s Steppe Ecosystems Project”. This program was developed as a part of “Output 3. Training program on steppe conservation and management” specifically for the journalists.

This program aims to promote the works carried out within the scope of the project, and natural and cultural values of the project pilot sites, and to communicate importance and need for conservation of the steppe ecosystems in Turkey through media.

It was consisting of field visits, interviews with related experts and local authorities, and short walks and field observations in Tek Tek Mountains National Park, Kızılkuyu Wildlife Reserve, and visiting Göbeklitepe World Heritage Site.

During the program, journalists were informed about the project experiences, wildlife elements, site management and natural resource use in the pilot sites.

## 2. PROGRAM

Upon the meetings with FAO and the project partners, 2-day press trip program was prepared, and carried out in Tek Tek Mountains National Park, Kızılkuyu Wildlife Reserve, and Göbeklitepe World Heritage Sites.

The program is given below:

## **25 May 2021, Tuesday – Arrival to Şanlıurfa**

19.30 – 21.00 Dinner

## **26 May 2021, Wednesday – Visiting Tek Tek Dağları National Park**

09:30-10:45 Arrival to Tek Tek Dağları National Park

10:45-14:30 **Tek Tek Dağları National Park Visit**

Visitor Centre

A short walk in Rüstem River Valley and information on the site

14:30-15:30 Lunch

15:30-17:00 Visiting Sogmatar and Şuayip Şehir Ruins

17.30-18:00 Return to hotel (Şanlıurfa)

19:30-21.00 Dinner

## **27 May 2021, Thursday - Visiting Kızılkuyu Wildlife Reserve**

10.00-11.00 Arrival to Kızılkuyu Wildlife Reserve

11:00-14:00 **Kızılkuyu Wildlife Reserve Visit**

Monitoring gazelles in Kızılkuyu Wildlife Reserve

A short walk at the site

Information on species action plans

Visiting Güzelkuyu Middle School for the school activities

14.00-15:00 Lunch

15:00-16:30 Visiting Göbeklitepe: Information on civilizations, and human steppe relations in Şanlıurfa steppes.

17:00 Return to hotel in Şanlıurfa

Departure

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRESS TRIP

The organizing process of the press trip program was initiated by an online meeting with FAO and DKM team. At the meeting, a draft program, and the task list for FAO and DKM were prepared. Also, local and national media organizations were listed for reaching to the target audience. Then, possible contacts have been identified, and a press release was prepared.

First, FAO project team contacted with the selected press members by sending an invitation mail giving the details of the program. Then, DKM team followed up the invitation and got in touch with the respondents to organize logistic needs. FAO team was informed during the whole process.

Dr. Nihan Yenilmez Arpa (National Project Coordinator) participated in the trip and gave information about the project, activities at pilot sites and shared information on the importance and conservation needs of the steppe ecosystems in detail. Experts on certain subjects and a veterinarian from General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks Şanlıurfa Provincial Branch Directorate informed the press members on the natural values of the pilot sites, and cultural and natural importance of the steppe ecosystems. Mrs. Fethiye Aytaç from DKM assisted the participants during the whole program.

Press trip program participants were from different cities (Ankara, İstanbul, Şanlıurfa and Diyarbakır): 4 woman (30%) and 9 male participants (70%).

Table 1. List of press trip participants

Name - Surname	Organization
Gürkan Akgüneş	Milliyet Newspaper
Harun Göksel Meriç	Köy TV
Zuhal İrgaş	Köy TV
Kamil Yılmaz	Tünaydın Newspaper
Serkan Ocak	Deutsche Welle
Tolga İldun	Atlas Dergisi
Tuğba Yıldırım	Republic of Turkey Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Department of Education and Publication
Şahin Dumlu	Republic of Turkey Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Department of Education and Publication
Öznur Turalıoğlu	FOX TV
Soner Dabağ	FOX TV
Bekir Şeyhanlı	İHA
Yasin Dikme	Anadolu Ajansı
Merve Şahin	TRT Diyarbakır

At the first day, Sheikh Ahaduzzaman (FAO Turkey, Programme Officer), and Ayşegül Selışık (FAO Turkey, Assistant Representative in Turkey) shared information about the importance of steppe ecosystems in Şanlıurfa and the project at local and national scale. Tek Tek Mountains National Park Visitor Center was introduced by Nihan Yenilmez Arpa (National Project Coordinator). The first visitors as a group were the journalists and press members who are a part of this press trip. They took photographs, aerial views with drone, and made interviews with FAO team about importance of the project, findings, and ongoing studies. Then, Soğmatar Ancient City (Yağmurlu Village) was visited. Children living in the village introduced to the historical value of the Ancient City. Mrs. Yenilmez Arpa gave detailed information about the site in the project context.

At the second day, Kızılkuyu Wildlife Reserve, and 75<sup>th</sup> Year Gazelle Breeding Station were visited. In the station, a veterinarian from General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks Şanlıurfa Provincial Branch Directorate introduced the station, giving detail on the life cycle of the gazelles, threats, and conservation efforts. Two expert ornithologist who were recording the important bird species in the field introduced Şanlıurfa steppe ecosystem significance in the context of bird habitat. Then, Güzelkuyu Primary school was visited. The teachers gave information about the school activities carried out within the project, and their influences on students and the families. They mentioned the linkages between conserving steppes and nature education, and awareness rising activities. Lastly, Göbeklitepe which is one of the most important UNESCO World Heritage Site was visited. The site was introduced by an expert archeologist and underlined the influence of nature on civilization.

During the program, the participants had the opportunity to be informed about the works carried out within the scope of the project, they also observed the practices in the field. According to face-to-face conversations, press members mentioned Şanlıurfa steppes has the great potential to UN Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 2: Zero Hunger). They also experienced the devastating effects of climate change in Şanlıurfa steppes.

#### **COVID-19 Measures:**

COVID-19 measures were taken in line with the FAO COVID-19 Guideline are taken for the program. A hygiene kit specific for each participant was prepared: 5 masks, 1 FFP2 masks, 100 ml cologne for personal use. The capacity of the bus in the field was organized more than twice the number of participants.

#### Measures taken:

- **Health checks:** No-one displaying any possible COVID-19 symptoms participated in the program.
- **Track and trace information:** Contact information and HES codes for all people at the program were recorded and all participants were reminded to contact the FAOR in case of (1) possible COVID-19 symptoms in the two days following the completion of the program; and/or (2) positive COVID-19 tests in the ten days following the end of the program.
- **Minimise participation:** The participants are limited to 13 people.
- Participants always wore masks.
- Hand sanitizer was available and used before, during and after the program.
- Physical distancing was always maintained during the program.
- No food / bottled water only: Food and/or snacks were provided in individual single-use sealed food containers. When eating, physical distancing must be maintained. The water was distributed in sealed single-user bottles only.

#### Project Materials:

These project materials (in Turkish) were shared with the participants at the first day of the program:

- Project tote bag
- Press trip agenda
- Booklet containing the works and materials prepared within the scope of the project
- USB with project title, having PDF versions of the documents produced by the project.





Figure 1. The project materials

#### 4. EVALUATION OF THE PRESS TRIP

All the participants stated their thanks for the organization in words and some of them sent follow up phones and emails after the program. During the program participants shared their views as follows:

- This program increased my awareness on the steppe ecosystems.
- I learnt that there are different species living in the steppes.
- During our visit, we saw the impacts of droguht and climate change in the region.
- I am glad to learn the ancestors of the cereals survive in Şanlıurfa.

The participants also stated that they will prepare news for their organization on the project sites and experiences.

After the program, an article entitled “Biodiversity of Şanlıurfa Steppe Ecosystem was promoted” was published on 15 different websites, and video news were shared on 10 different news websites. Additionally 2 YouTube videos were broadcasted, and 2 articles were published.

One of the participants prepared 2 videos about 30 min and 7 minutes on the press trip and broadcasted them on his YouTube channel.

A representative from Tarım TV (national TV channel of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry) will prepare a video news on the press trip and the project outputs.

During the press trip, a photojournalist from ATLAS monthly magazine took photographs and shared them by his own social media accounts. These photos will be published in the next issues of the magazine in line with the press release and information provided.

FAO and DKM team have the contact details of the press members and as a follow up next phases of the project will be shared with them.

## 5. NEWS

Press members took photographs, aerial views, video records, and made interviews with FAO officials. After the program, below stated news were published and broadcasted:

The newspaper article within the title “Biodiversity of Şanlıurfa Steppe Ecosystem was introduced” was published in local and national web news:

- <https://www.haberturk.com/sanliurfa-haberleri/87566713-sanliurfanin-bozkirlarinin-biyolojik-yapisi-tanitildi>
- <https://www.sondakika.com/haber/haber-sanliurfa-bozkirlarinin-sahip-oldugu-biyolojik-14159322/>
- <https://www.urfadasin.com/sanliurfa-nin-bozkirlarinin-biyolojik-yapisi-tanitildi>

- <https://www.urfadegisim.com/gazeteciler-incelemeye-cikti-biyolojik-cesitlilik-tanitildi/45999/>
- <https://yenicizgihaber.com/haber/sanliurfanin-bozkirlarinin-biyolojik-yapisi-yerli-ve-yabanci-basina-tanitildi-haberi-152533.html>
- <https://www.haberler.com/sanliurfa-bozkirlarinin-sahip-oldugu-biyolojik-14159322-haberi/>
- <http://www.mardinhaber.com.tr/haber-sanliurfa-nin-bozkirlarinin-biyolojik-yapisi-tanitildi-94333.html>
- <https://www.haberalanya.com.tr/cevre/sanliurfanin-bozkirlarinin-biyolojik-yapisi-tanitildi-h350961.html>
- <https://urfapostasi.com/2021/05/27/sanliurfanin-bozkirlarinin-biyolojik-yapisi-tanitildi/?ajax=1>
- <https://www.ulusalhaber.com.tr/sanliurfanin-bozkirlarinin-biyolojik-yapisi-tanitildi/285501/>
- <https://www.haber16.com/sanliurfa-nin-bozkirlarinin-biyolojik-yapisi-tanitildi/391085/>
- <https://www.nethaber.com.tr/sanliurfa-nin-bozkirlarinin-biyolojik-yapisi-tanitildi/76384/>
- <https://www.sabah.com.tr/sanliurfa/2021/05/27/sanliurfanin-bozkirlarinin-biyolojik-yapisi-tanitildi>
- <https://www.imaret.com.tr/sanliurfa-nin-bozkirlarinin-biyolojik-yapisi-tanitildi/84586/>
- <http://www.tunaydingazetesi.com/haber/49632/anadolu-bozkirlari-insanliga-umut-odu/>

### **Video News:**

Videos on Tek Tek Mountains National Park and visitor center, interview with Ayşegül Selişik (FAO Turkey, Assistant Representative in Turkey), and Nihan Yenilmez Arpa (National Project Coordinator) were broadcasted:

- Haberler.com (duration 07:04): <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x81jiyp>
- Beyazgazete (duration: 07:31): <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x81ji0t>
- Beyazgazete (duration: 05:50): <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x81jo1y>
- Mynet.com (duration 05:50): <https://www.mynet.com/sanliurfanin-bozkirlarinin-biyolojik-yapisi-tanitildi-7235600-myvideo>
- Sondakika.com (duration 07:24): <https://www.sondakika.com/haber/haber-sanliurfa-bozkirlarinin-sahip-oldugu-biyolojik-14159322/>
- Haberler.com (duration 07:24): <https://www.haberler.com/sanliurfa-bozkirlarinin-sahip-oldugu-biyolojik-14159322-haberi/>
- Deutsche Welle Turkish Special Video-news (17 June 2021), (duration: 10:30): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZGqh6aPXQc8>
- Tarım TV, web news and video news (duration: 02:03) <https://www.tarimtv.gov.tr/tr/video-detay/bozkir-ekosistemleri-icin-proje-ve-guc-birligi-14749>
- Milliyet Newspaper, Special news: <https://www.milliyet.com.tr/yazarlar/gurkan-akgunes/bozkirin-cigli-6539457>
- FOX TV Special News

### **YouTube videos:**

- The video-news was edited by Kamil Yılmaz: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNtbs4-JpQc>

