



“Conservation and Sustainable Management  
of Turkey’s Steppe Ecosystems Project”  
GCP/TUR/061/GFF

# MONITORING PROGRAM FOR TEK TEK MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK, KIZILKUYU WILDLIFE DEVELOPMENT AREA AND KARACADAG STEPPES

Monitoring programs are one of the most important tools that enable nature conservation and sustainable management of natural resources. It increases the effectiveness of management mechanisms by periodically detecting the changes in monitoring indicators and taking necessary measures according to the trends of the changes. In recent years, monitoring programs have been handled with more holistic approaches, in which monitoring issues are associated with different components such as environmental, socio-economic, cultural, ecological, management effectiveness in line with the objectives and targets.

Monitoring is based on making reliable observations of how species, ecosystems and social issues change over time, naturally and as a result of human intervention, to detect, measure and evaluate results and change practices. And monitoring is defined as a cyclical process with 5 steps. This cycle begins with identifying the need for monitoring and ends with defining the purpose, developing the monitoring program, implementing implementation, and making evaluations, respectively.

Monitoring Program for the project sites was prepared within the scope of the "Conservation and Sustainable Management of Turkey's Steppe Ecosystems Project" carried out by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MoAF), aiming to strengthen the conservation of Turkey's steppe ecosystems through effective management in protected areas and extending the conservation of steppe biodiversity in production landscapes.

In the monitoring program, the inventory data obtained from the "Conservation and Sustainable Management of Turkey's Steppe Ecosystems Project" and the experience gained from the Şanlıurfa Steppe Conservation Strategy and Action Plan studies, as well as the Monitoring issues determined for Şanlıurfa within the scope of the "National Biodiversity Inventory and Monitoring Project" carried out on a province basis throughout the country and coordinated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks were evaluated altogether. Thus, the project outputs were associated with the national monitoring program, and a biodiversity monitoring program was developed after a participatory process with the contributions of relevant stakeholders and experts.

In the process, separate sets of indicators for each of the four components and monitoring subprograms and appropriate monitoring methods for monitoring these indicators were defined, forms were prepared for data collection, analysis and evaluation, and all stages before the implementation phase were completed.

Indicators and monitoring implementation plans for the environmental monitoring component have been prepared based on the intersecting criteria of Climate, Land Degradation and Desertification and Biodiversity, which are used in the international arena and are especially the three conventions of the United Nations (UN).

The main criterion in the creation of the joint monitoring components of these contracts is that the feature to be monitored can measure the response of the ecosystem to sustainable uses or misuses in the fastest, most economical, and simplest way. In this context, environmental monitoring recommendations and justifications for Karacadağ Steppes on land use, climate and pollution are presented within the framework of the UN's land degradation neutrality (LDN) approach.

The inclusion of the socio-economic component in the monitoring program strengthened the monitoring program. Notably, monitoring the deep-rooted humannature interaction from the past to present in the region and the changes caused by this interaction is as important as the monitoring of biodiversity and environmental factors. To monitor the socio-economic, socio-cultural structure of the society living in and around Karacadağ Steppes and the changes in the perceptions of the natural environment they live in, it is under the main headings of demography, socioeconomic status, visitor management, tourism, and recreation – monitoring indicators have been determined and an implementation plan has been prepared.

The management effectiveness monitoring component is perhaps the component that will make the most important contribution to the conservation of the area. In this context, the success of the implementation of the management plan, the change in the scores obtained by using the management effectiveness evaluation tools (METT, EOH), the change in the number and capacity of the personnel, the change in the equipment and infrastructure investments were the subjects of monitoring.

The objectives of the management plans prepared for a certain period and the monitoring of the activities aimed to be implemented during this period and the evaluation of their effectiveness will provide more successful conditions for the management of the area with the new activities updated in the next plan period.

#### The monitoring topics:

- Monitoring Indicator
- Monitoring Level
- Monitoring Period and Frequency
- Monitoring Area
- Monitoring Method
- Monitoring Team/Expertise
- Target / Success Criteria

#### The monitoring program components:

- Environment component
- Biodiversity component
- Socio-economic component
- Management effectiveness component