

THE FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT OF THE PROJECT

**«A Comparison and Experience Exchange
between the National Marine Park of
Alonnisos – Northern Sporades (NMPANS)
(Greece) and the Foça Specially Protected Area
(FSPA) (Turkey)
involving the NGOs MOm and SAD-AFAG»**

**SAD-AFAG
UNDERWATER RESEARCH SOCIETY
MED. SEAL RESEARCH GROUP**



**MOm
HELLENIC SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY
AND CONSERVATION OF THE MONK
SEAL**



With the support of the EC Delegation to Turkey within the framework of
MICRO PROJECT PROGRAMME FOR TURKISH-GREEK CIVIC DIALOGUE - CIVIL
SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

THE FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT OF THE PROJECT

1. Name of contractor and of her/his legal representative:

SAD (Underwater Research Society) / Mr. Yalçın Savas, Board Member

2. Name and title of the person responsible for the project/action:

Mr. Yalçın Savas, Board Member

3. Title of the project:

A Comparison and Experience Exchange between the National Marine Park of Alonnisos – Northern Sporades (NMPANS) (Greece) and the Foça Specially Protected Area (FSPA) (Turkey) involving the NGOs MOM and SAD-AFAG

4. Reference number of the project:

DELTUR/MEDTQ/44-03

5. Start date of the project:

22 March 2004

6. End date of the project:

22 December 2004

7. Country (ies) in which the project took place:

Turkey and Greece

A. Contractual Compliance

1. Has the project been carried out as foreseen in the terms of reference of the contract? If not, please explain how and why the original proposal was modified, including the dates that any addenda were requested and received.

Although the project activities were carried out as defined in the project contract conceptually, their order was changed and their number increased within the same budget:

The visit of the Turkish group to Alonnisos (originally the second activity in the project contract) was undertaken as the first activity. Correspondingly, the visit of the Greek group to Foça was carried out as the second activity although it was originally planned as the first. The main reason for this change was the intention of the project beneficiary and its partner to use the Foça Fisheries Festival as a tool to strengthen the bonds between the fishermen of both regions. As result of this change, it was possible to request the fishermen (who were already acquainted with each other due to the first activity on Alonissos) to participate in a panel as speakers to discuss fisheries issues after 10 years of monk seal conservation in Foça and Alonnisos. Besides the panel discussion, other festival activities such as net mending and hook tying - providing an opportunity for friendly competition between Greek and Turkish fishermen - served to increase communication between the participants. The participation of the Greek fishermen in the contests and the willingness of key members of their group to present awards to the various contest winners on the stage in the main square of Foça, provided a welcome opportunity to introduce the Greek project partners to the general public in Foça.

Variations to the original proposal did not require specific approval from the EC Delegation since they involved only changes in order, not content.

2. Was the provisional budget of the project respected? If not, please explain any changes that occurred.

As for the project budget, required changes were made according to Annex II of the project contract (General conditions applicable to European Community - financed grant contracts for external actions / Article 9 / paragraph 9.2; the EC Delegation was informed accordingly in writing.)

The changes were made in the budget lines 1. Human Resources, 2. Travel and 5. Other costs and Services within the limits explained in the Annex II / Article 9 / Paragraph 9.2 of the contract.

The main reason for the addendum in the project budget was an underestimation in the amount allocated for the "participant per-diems". This budget item had to be increased; without these reallocations, the workshop participants could not have been paid adequate per-diems. In order to increase the assigned amount for this budget item, some money was saved in travel costs and meeting room rent and transferred to the per-diems. Saving money in travel expenses became possible because flight costs at the time were cheaper than the amounts budgeted. MOM received a sponsorship from the Flying Dolphins ferry company (for transportation to/from Alonnisos) for their personnel, while SAD-AFAG staff travelled to Greece by ferry instead of by plane during the first activity. For the cost of the meeting room, saving was achieved by changing the venue and the number of the days requiring rent. The total amount defined by the project budget and the amount requested from the EC were not increased due to these changes, and were even decreased to some extent.

3. What dates were payments requested and received?

An advance payment of EUR 33,567.- (representing 80% of the contracted amount to be paid by the EC) was requested in the letter of SAD signed by Yalçın Savas on 22 March 2004. The money was credited to SAD's dedicated bank account on 8 April 2004.

B. Project Activities

1. Please list all the activities since the beginning of the project.

Eg: Activity 1:

Conference at town X with Y participants for Z days

Topics covered:

Reason for modification for the planned activity (if applicable):

Your assessment of the results of this activity:

Activity 1:

Site visit to Alonnisos

24-31 July 2004 / 6 days in Alonnisos and 2 days in transit for Turks.

Participants:

Turkey: Yalçın Savas and Harun Güçlüsoy (SAD-AFAG), Yasar Balta and Sevki Avci (Foça Fishermen's Coop.), Guner Ergun (Specially Protected Areas Auth.)

Greece: Vrassidas Zavras, Kalliopi Gorgorapti, Eleni Tounta, Panoyiotis Dendrinis and Eugenia Androukaki (MOM), Orestis Papachristou (Mayor of Alonnisos), Dimitris Kalogiannis (President of Alonnisos Fishing Cooperative), Fokas Patras (Vice-president of Alonnisos Fishing Cooperative), Thodoris Malamatenias (President of Alonnisos Fishing Association)

Four day capacity building workshops: Implemented according to the planned concept. MOM staff provided information with presentations on legislation relevant to nature conservation in Greece with a special emphasis on Natura 2000, the history of monk seal conservation in Greece, the history of the NMPANS, management and guarding of the NMPANS.

With participation of the Greek fishermen from Alonnisos, the status of fisheries, conditions and capacities of fisheries cooperatives and fishery related legislation in Foça and Alonnisos were discussed. Alonnisos Fishing Cooperative's facilities were visited under the guidance of Mr. Fokas Patras, vice-president of the Alonnisos Fishing Cooperative.

A separate project, aiming to establish a rescue and information network in Turkey and combined post mortem studies, was subsequently developed jointly by SAD-AFAG and MOM, and proposed by the latter to the Micro II programme of the EC Turkey. The strategy and finer details of the application of this proposed project were also discussed as planned.

A discussion was undertaken between MOM and SAD-AFAG staff on the feasibility of further cooperation on other issues of mutual concern. Interreg 3 and the Life Nature programme were evaluated accordingly. The main subject discussed to be proposed for implementation under the Community Initiative INTERREG III A / Strand A Greece - Turkey was the mitigation of the threats for the Mediterranean monk seal in the two countries with main means / tools the following activities: further development of research work on the species, rescue and rehabilitation of animals in need, public awareness activities targeting local population of coastal and island areas, environmental education of the children of these areas, and finally promotion activities for the national environment of the important for the species areas. Activities for the mitigation of the monk seal-fisheries conflict were proposed for the budget line LIFE-Nature. In addition, the further development of collaboration between bodies of the two countries, Alonnisos and Foca fishing cooperatives included, was discussed.

In situ introduction to NMPANS by boat: Turkish project participants and several MOM staff members visited the marine park on MOM's vessel ODYSSEA. In a sheltered cove fishing boats were visited, providing Turkish and Greek fishermen with another opportunity to discuss fisheries in the marine park, fishing techniques and the gear used.

By the end of the activity, SAD-AFAG staff and the expert from the Authority for Specially Protected Areas had gained a better understanding of the pioneering Greek experience in monk seal research and conservation. This was especially important for the expert from

the Authority since it is the inclination of the Ministry of the Environment in Turkey to give the responsibility for any monk seal conservation area to this branch of the Ministry. Turkish and Greek fishermen who support monk seal conservation met each other for the first time and realised that they were not alone.

The positive reaction of the fishermen to one another was beyond expectations and sufficiently encouraging for SAD-AFAG and MOM to develop further joint initiatives with the fishermen as partners.

Activity 2:

Site visit to Foça

2-9 September 2004 /6 days in Foça and 2 days in transit for the Greeks.

Participants:

Turkey: Yalçın Savas, Harun Güçlüsoy, Cem O. Kirac, Yesim Aslan, Ahmet and Ozlem Bolat (SAD-AFAG), Yasar Balta and Sevki Avcı (Foça Fisheries Coop.), Guner Ergun (Specially Protected Areas Auth.), Gökhan Demirag (Mayor of Foça), Nihat Dirim (former mayor of Foça), Avni Gok and Muzaffer Ađluç (Foça Municipality), Greece: Vrassidas Zavras and Eleni Tounta (MOM), Orestis Papachristou (Mayor of Alonnisos), Dimitris Kalogiannis (President of Alonnisos Fishing Cooperative), Thodoris Malamatenias (President of Alonnisos Fishing Association)

Four day capacity building workshops: Implemented according to the originally planned concept. SAD personnel provided information about the area, nature conservation legislation in Turkey, history of monk seal conservation in Turkey and of the Foça marine protected area, management and patrolling in the Foça MPA, the role of SAD as an NGO in the management, future prospects for the MPA, fisheries and the fisheries cooperative in Foça. Discussion on possible future joint initiatives, that began during the first workshop in Alonnisos, continued in Foça. Aquaculture installations and monk seal interactions were discussed and joint project opportunities on this issue were evaluated. SAD-AFAG's partnership in a Life Nature project proposal to be submitted by MOM was considered.

In situ introduction to the Foça protected area by boat: Since the Foça Marine Protected Area is considerably smaller than the NMPANS, this activity could be organised and undertaken with comparative ease. One fishermen from Foça also attended the field trip for further discussions on fisheries issues.

Fisheries festival activities and panel discussion: Although these activities were not planned in the project proposal, both the beneficiary and the partner chose to change the timing of Activity 1 and 2 (described in Annex 1 of the project contract) in order to take advantage of the benefits of a festival atmosphere. It was felt that this would be conducive to publicising the project and the visit of the Greeks to the citizens of Foça and the general public of Turkey, while also encouraging relations between the fishermen and the mayors of both communities. The project participants attended the project workshops in the mornings and followed the festival events in the afternoons. Greek fishermen even participated in net mending and hook tying contests. MOM staff and the Mayor of Alonnisos, invited to the stage to present the awards of the contest winners, were introduced to the audience with information on their mission to Foça.

Activity 3:

Final evaluation workshop in Foça

23-27 October 2004 /3 days in Foça and 2 days in transit for the Greeks

Participants:

Turkey: Yalçın Savas and Harun Güçlüsoy (SAD-AFAG)

Greece: Vrassidas Zavras and Kalliopi Gorgorapti (MOM)

During this three-day workshop, MOM and SAD-AFAG staff evaluated the results of the previous activities. Future cooperation strategies and methods of disseminating the project's results were also discussed. It was agreed that SAD-AFAG would prepare an article for The Monachus Guardian.

Both parties share the belief that the project has opened encouraging opportunities for future joint initiatives involving the fishing communities of Foça and Alonnisos and even of Greece and Turkey in general. The partners also support the inclusion of the municipal bodies in future joint projects as far as is feasible.

The partners also discussed the content of the presentation to be made to the relevant local and national GOs in Turkey as the final activity of the current project.

*Activity 4: Dissemination of the final report and presentations to national and local authorities in Turkey, Foça, Izmir, Ankara
14-17 December 2004*

Participants:

Turkey: Yalçın Savas (SAD-AFAG), Local Governor of Foça, Mayor of Foça and municipality officers, personnel of the Izmir Directorate of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, personnel of Nature Cons. and National Parks Gen. Dir. of the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

The Project Executant visited the relevant GOs in Foça, Izmir and Ankara and provided information to the higher ranking officers in each organization. A PowerPoint presentation, specifically prepared for this activity, was used and copies on CD distributed.

Activity 5:

Publication about the results of the project

Participants:

Turkey: Yalçın Savas and Harun Guçlusoy (SAD-AFAG)

Greece: Kalliopi Gorgorapti (MOM)

A three language project report was prepared, distributed in Turkey and Greece to the relevant contacts and submitted to The Monachus Guardian for publication.

2. Please list all materials and publications produced during the project (please enclose a copy of each item).

A three language (Turkish – Greek – English) report providing information to the general public and the authorities on the project and its results.

A CD containing an informative PowerPoint presentation about the project to be distributed to relevant people and organizations.

3. Please outline any contracted activities and publications that have not taken place and any other changes to the foreseen activities or timetable, explaining the reasons for these.

There was no planned activity that could not be implemented. Indeed, the partners undertook more activities with the same planned budget.

On the other hand, all activities were subject to a delay of approximately two months. The main reason for this was SAD's obligation to apply to the governorship of Ankara, where it is registered, in order to obtain a foreign financial support use permit according to the law then governing the operation of societies. SAD submitted its request on 7 April and received the permit on 28 May. From that day on, the project activities were planned according to the mutually convenient times of SAD-AFAG and MOM. Another reason for the delay was the intention of the project partners to execute the second site visit to Foça during the fisheries festival in September, which was not foreseen during project planning.

4. What problems have arisen and how have these been addressed?

It was expected that a Turkish-Greek interpreter would be hired in order to facilitate the communication between the fishermen during the workshops and field visits and in the panel discussion in Foça during the festival. This was not possible, however, during the first activity on Alonnisos. Although an interpreter was made available during the

workshops in the second activity in Foça, it was noted that his abilities were insufficient to meet requirements. Another interpreter, an academician of the University of Ankara, was found through the kind intervention of the CSDP (Civil Society Development Program) team. Travelling by plane from Ankara to Foça, she replaced the existing interpreter mid-action and met with keen approval by the Greek participants for the high quality of her language skills. Her costs were shared by the Mayor of Foça and SAD. It was noted that there were many activities involving Turks and Greeks during this period, and as a consequence there were very few Turkish-Greek interpreters available (limited in number at the best of times). Communications between the project participants were facilitated by SAD-AFAG and MOM staff from Greek to English and from English to Turkish or vice versa at times when an interpreter was not available.

C. Impact and Evaluation

1. What is your assessment of the results of the project? Include observations on the extent to which foreseen goals were met and whether the project has had any unforeseen positive or negative results.

Both SAD-AFAG and MOM evaluated the project as successful beyond their expectations, particularly when considering the involvement of the mayors and fishermen. During the second activity, the technical visit to Foça, the Mayor of Alonnisos expressed his support for the twinning of Alonnisos and Foça and the Mayor of Foça was assured that his proposal would be passed on to the municipal council for their approval. The head of the fisheries cooperative in Foça welcomed the project participants to his house for dinner. The mayor of Foça also hosted a welcome dinner for the participants, provided diesel fuel for SAD's vehicle during the course of the project activity, and shared the costs of the interpreter. The participating fishermen, the Mayor of Alonnisos and the former Mayor of Foça willingly agreed to become speakers in a discussion panel not included in the original programme; all demonstrated a positive attitude towards monk seal conservation during their remarks. Additionally, the fishermen of Foça and Alonnisos showed a great interest in sharing their conservation experiences and their professional knowledge.

2. In the light of experience gained, please describe what has been both positive and negative in the implementation and management of the project.

The most positive aspects can be listed as the goodwill of the fishermen from both countries that was beyond expectations, the positive attitude of the mayors towards extending their relations, and the free visas provided by the Consulate of Greece in Izmir to the Turkish project participants.

The only noteworthy negative experience was the problem faced in translation caused by the first interpreter. However, the beneficiary was able to find a replacement and rectify the problem within 24 hours.

3. What has been the impact on both the target group and the target region?

Although the people and the fishermen of Foça are accustomed to seeing Greeks in their town, this was the first time that they had been introduced to people and fishermen from another monk seal conservation area, who suffered and benefited in very similar ways. Turks are not common visitors to Alonnisos, yet learning of their experiences in the monk seal conservation area in Foça proved equally interesting for the Greek fishermen. The comment of the head of the fishermen's association of Alonnisos, made during the panel discussion in Foça, was symbolic of this communication between countries and cultures: "I have found friends here and nobody can change my attitude from now on!"

Technically, SAD and MOM staff gained a better understanding of each other's region and the conservation projects implemented within them. The participation of the Mayor of Alonnisos and the expert from the Specially Protected Areas Authority of Turkey proved

particularly helpful in developing the relations of both NGOs with GOs and local authorities. Additionally, as a result of their visits, these authorities gained an important understanding that they are not alone in implementing monk seal conservation efforts and facing conservation challenges.

4. How and by whom have the activities been monitored/evaluated? Please summarise the results of the feedback received

The operation of the project and its activities were monitored internally both by SAD-AFAG and MOM during execution. An evaluation was asked to Prof. Dr. Bulent Cihangir, Director, Marine Sciences and Technologies Institute (Izmir). The evaluation report could not be fulfilled till the end of the reporting period.

5. What impact has the project had on your organisation (and on your partners, if applicable)?

The project has increased the capacity of the organisations (MOM & SAD-AFAG) to successfully implement similar activities involving local authorities, conservationists and public servants from the two countries. It has also increased the capacity of the organisations to fulfil project requirements on an international level. With the participation of the local communities, the project has raised awareness of our neighbours' needs and difficulties in nature conservation activities, thus helping to ensure successful planning of common future initiatives.

D. Partners and other Co-operation

1. How do you assess the relationship between the partners of this project? Give details about the division of responsibilities, transfer of expertise, and overall co-ordination of the partnership(s).

SAD-AFAG: SAD-AFAG was happy with the partnership of MOM in this project, and also beyond since our practical relationship began in the year 2001. SAD-AFAG was responsible for the general management of the project and this might have proven difficult in the absence of a partner of MOM's outlook and experience. MOM staff performed their roles in the project satisfactorily and with dedication, including managing the activities in Greece, participating in the activities in Turkey, sharing their experiences and knowledge, and providing important support to SAD-AFAG in the overall management of the project.

MOM: MOM considers the current project a success. The aims of the project were achieved and all issues during the implementation period were adequately addressed. This was made possible mainly due to the performance of the project leaders, namely SAD-AFAG personnel. In particular, SAD-AFAG participants during their visit to Greece successfully managed the meetings with the local authorities, fishing cooperatives and inhabitants of Alonnisos. During their stay but also during MOM's visit to Foca, it was demonstrated once again that the collaboration between the two NGOs has profound and stable foundations with a great potential for further development. Transfer of expertise is an on-going process leading to a better understanding of each other's particularities and thus enhancing the efficiency of our work for nature conservation.

2. Is the partnership to continue? If so, how? If not, why?

SAD-AFAG has a strong intention to continue the collaboration with its Greek counterpart in the future as far as the political conditions between the two countries and the available funding sources allow. Building on our efforts to date, this collaboration might involve sharing information and experience, joint initiatives and projects and developing common regional policies.

MOM strongly believes that healthy and fruitful collaborations are of utmost importance in achieving the goals of the organisation. To that end it is a high priority to continuously explore all possible means (financial, social, and political) that would allow for the continuation of this collaboration.

3. How would you assess the relationship between your organization and state authorities in the project countries? How has this relationship affected the project?

SAD-AFAG faced no difficulty in the project implementation in Turkey. The Authority for Specially Protected Areas replied positively and swiftly to our invitation to take part in the project. The expert appointed by the Authority to participate in the project was both knowledgeable and sensitive to its broader implications. Local authorities in Foça supported the project financially by providing diesel fuel, sharing the costs of an interpreter and also taking part in project activities whenever requested to do so. The Greek authorities were also helpful, as evidenced by the gesture of the Greek consulate in Izmir which provided visas free of charge.

MOM did not encounter any problem during the realization of the project between itself and the state authorities in Greece or in Turkey. However, it should be noted that excessive bureaucracy may sometimes cause significant delays during the realization of similar projects which seek to encourage the open and sincere exchange of experiences between local communities of the two countries.

E. Other

1. Visibility: how was the visibility of the EU contribution ensured in the project?

The project activities and its objectives were conveyed to the media whenever possible. On each such occasion the support of the EC was underlined to the journalists and found its place in news items in the media, and in the press in particular. As planned in Annex 1 of the project contract, an article was published in The Monachus Guardian about the SAD-AFAG – MOM joint activities with the support of the EC. The project and/or its activities were also publicised in the newsletters of SAD-AFAG and MOM and appeared in the media on at least 8 occasions in the Turkish press and once on the Turkish private TV channel NTV. Unfortunately, although highlighted by the project partners, the news items did not cite the EU contribution on every occasion.

2. Did the grant help secure new sources of funding for the project? Please give details.

Major additional funding could not be raised for the project.

3. Viability: will the work carried out in this project continue after the support from the European Commission has ended? Please give details.

Although the planned activities were completed by the end of the project, it is hoped that relations established during its course will be maintained and strengthened by the fishermen and the municipalities. On the other hand, the partners also recognise that these good intentions may also require SAD-AFAG's and MOM's facilitation role in order to further the communication between the parties.

4. Suggestions

It is the opinion of both partners that continuation of such funding mechanisms on behalf of the European Commission is of vital importance for both countries' NGOs. Civil Society dialogue between the two neighbours, that needs to be enhanced during Turkey's process to become a full member state of the EU, also depends greatly on the availability of financial support mechanisms, similar to the one that made the successful realisation of the current project possible.