

Assessment of Protected Areas Management Effectiveness in Turkey

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By

Nihan Yenilmez Arpa, Ufuk Coşgun,
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and Sadık Serhat Arda

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CONTENTS

Figures	viii
Tables	xiv
Acknowledgements	xviii
Abbreviations	xx
Executive Summary.....	xxiii
Content	xxvi
Introduction	1
Chapter 1	14
Rappam - Conceptual Framework	
1. Conceptual Framework.....	14
Chapter 2	19
Results of 2022 Rappam Assessment for National Parks	
2.1. Assessment for National Parks	19
2.2. 2022 Assessment Results-National Parks	21
2.2.1. Pressure and Threats.....	22
2.2.2. Biological Importance	41
2.2.3. Socio-Economic Importance	48
2.2.4. Vulnerability-context.....	53
2.2.5. Objectives.....	58
2.2.6. Legal Security	62
2.2.7. Protected Area Design and Planning	66
2.2.8. Staff.....	70
2.2.9. Communication and Information Inputs.....	74
2.2.10. Infrastructure	78
2.2.11. Financing.....	82
2.2.12. Management Planning.....	87

2.2.13. Decision-Making Processes in Management.....	91
2.2.14. Research, Monitoring and Evaluation	95
2.2.15. Outputs	98
2.2.16. Protected Area System Level Design	102
2.2.17. Protected Area Policies	105
2.2.18. Policy Environment.....	109
Chapter 3	113
Results of 2022 Rappam Assessment for Natural Parks	
3.1. 2022 Assessment-Natural Parks.....	113
3.2. 2022 Assessment Results-Natural Parks	117
3.2.1. Pressure and Threats.....	117
3.2.2. Biological Importance	132
3.2.3. Socio-Economic Importance	136
3.2.4. Vulnerability Context.....	140
3.2.5. Objectives.....	143
3.2.6. Legal Security	147
3.2.7. Protected Area Design and Planning.....	150
3.2.8. Staffing.....	153
3.2.9. Communication-Information.....	155
3.2.10. Infrastructure	158
3.2.11. Financing.....	160
3.2.12. Management Planning	164
3.2.13. Decision-Making Processes of the Management.....	166
3.2.14. Research, Development and Monitoring	169
3.2.15. Outputs	172
3.2.16. Policy Environment.....	174
3.2.17. Protected Area Policies	177
3.2.18. Protected Area System Level Design	180
Chapter 4	184
Comporision of 2005,2009 and 2022	
4.1. Comparison and Analysis of 2005, 2009 and 2022 Results for National Parks	199
4.1.1. Environment.....	199
4.1.2. Management Effectiveness.....	220
4.1.3. Protected Area System	237
4.2. Comparison and Analysis of 2009 and 2022 Results for Natural Parks.....	242
4.2.1. Environment.....	242
4.2.2. Management Effectiveness.....	251

Chapter 5	256
Conclusion and Recommendations	
References	271
Appendices	276
Appendix-A. List of Participants	278
Appendix-B. List of national parks and natural parks on which RAPPAM was implemented.....	282
Appendix-C. Rappam Form	284
Appendix-D. The Role and Importance of Protected Areas in the Protection of Rural Landscapes, Problems and Recommendations for Solutions-Article-Abstract	301
Appendix-E. Elements of the RAPPAM methodology and prioritization of the elements.....	310
Biographies.....	327

FIGURES

Figure 1. Number and categories of protected areas managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	4
Figure 2. Categories and total area of protected areas managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	5
Figure 2.1. Cumulative distribution of pressure elements over national parks.....	25
Figure 2.2. Cumulative distribution of pressure elements (from highest to lowest).....	27
Figure 2.3. Cumulative distribution of pressure elements for each national park	30
Figure 2.4. Cumulative distribution of pressure elements for each national park - from highest to lowest	31
Figure 2.5. Cumulative distribution of threat elements for national parks.....	38
Figure 2.6. Cumulative distribution of threat elements for each national park	40
Figure 2.7. Cumulative assessment of biological importance elements ...	43
Figure 2.8. Status of forty-five national parks in terms of biological importance	44
Figure 2.9. State of national parks from highest to lowest in terms of biological importance.....	45
Figure 2.10. Percentage and distribution of cumulative assessment of biodiversity elements	46
Figure 2.11. Cumulative assessment of the socio-economic importance of national parks	50
Figure 2.12. Cumulative assessment of socio-economic importance elements for each national park	52
Figure 2.13. Cumulative assessment of the vulnerability-context of national parks.....	55
Figure 2.14. Cumulative assessment of vulnerability-context elements for each national park	57
Figure 2.15. Cumulative assessment of the objective elements of national parks.....	60
Figure 2.16. Cumulative assessment of objectives elements for each national park	61

Figure 2.17. Cumulative assessment of legal security elements of national parks.....	63
Figure 2.18. Cumulative assessment of legal security elements for each national park	65
Figure 2.19. Results of cumulative assessment of design and planning elements of national parks	67
Figure 2.20. Cumulative assessment of Protected Area Design and Planning elements for each national park	69
Figure 2.21. Results of cumulative assessment of staff status of national parks.....	71
Figure 2.22. Cumulative assessment of staff status of national parks for each national park	73
Figure 2.23. Results of cumulative assessment of communication and information inputs element of national parks.....	75
Figure 2.24. Cumulative assessment of communication and information inputs status of national parks for each national park	77
Figure 2.25. Results of cumulative assessment of infrastructure element of national parks	79
Figure 2.26. Cumulative assessment of infrastructure status of national parks for each national park	81
Figure 2.27. Results of cumulative assessment of financing element of national parks	83
Figure 2.28. Cumulative assessment of financing status of national parks for each national park.....	85
Figure 2.29. Results of cumulative assessment of management planning element of national parks	88
Figure 2.30. Cumulative assessment of management planning status of national parks for each national park	90
Figure 2.31. Results of cumulative assessment of decision-making processes in management of national park.....	92
Figure 2.32. Cumulative assessment of decision-making processes in management status of national parks for each national park.....	94
Figure 2.33. Results of cumulative assessment of R&D element of national parks	96
Figure 2.34. Cumulative assessment of R&D status of national parks for each national park	97
Figure 2.35. Results of cumulative assessment of outputs element of national parks	99
Figure 2.36. Cumulative assessment of outputs status of national parks for each national park	101

Figure 2.37. Results of cumulative assessment of system level design element of national parksThe prominent matters related to the assessment of Protected Area system level are as follows.....	104
Figure 2.38. Results of cumulative assessment of protected area policy element of national parks	107
Figure 2.39. Results of cumulative assessment of policy environment element of national parks	111
Figure 3.1. The numerical number and size of natural parks in Türkiye from 1983 to 2022.....	115
Figure 3.2. Size of natural parks between 1983 to 2022 (Ha).....	115
Figure 3.3. The number of natural parks between 1983-2022	116
Figure 3.4. Cumulative distribution of pressure elements over natural parks subject to assessment.....	121
Figure 3.5. Cumulative distribution of pressure elements for each of the natural parks subject to the assessment.....	124
Figure 3.6. Cumulative distribution of threat elements for natural parks.....	129
Figure 3.7. Cumulative distribution of threat elements for each natural park	131
Figure 3.8. Cumulative assessment of biological importance elements	134
Figure 3.9. Status of natural parks in terms of biological importance ...	135
Figure 3.10. Cumulative assessment of socio-economic importance elements	137
Figure 3.11. Assessment status of socio-economic importance elements for each natural park	138
Figure 3.12. Cumulative assessment of vulnerability-status elements...	141
Figure 3.13. Cumulative assessment of sensitivity-status elements for each natural park	142
Figure 3.14. Cumulative assessment of objectives elements	144
Figure 3.15. Cumulative assessment of objectives elements for each natural park	145
Figure 3.16. Cumulative assessment of legal security elements	148
Figure 3.17. Cumulative assessment of legal security elements for each natural park	148
Figure 3.18. Cumulative assessment of protected area design and planning elements	151
Figure 3.19. Cumulative assessment of protected area design and planning elements for each natural park	151
Figure 3.20. Cumulative assessment of staff elements	154
Figure 3.21. Cumulative assessment of staff elements for each natural park	154

Figure 3.22. Cumulative assessment of communication-information elements	156
Figure 3.23. Cumulative assessment of communication-information elements for each natural park	157
Figure 3.24. Cumulative assessment of infrastructure elements	159
Figure 3.25. Cumulative assessment of infrastructure elements for each natural park	159
Figure 3.26. Cumulative assessment of financing elements	162
Figure 3.27. Cumulative assessment of financing elements for each natural park	162
Figure 3.28. Cumulative assessment of management planning elements	165
Figure 3.29. Cumulative assessment of management planning elements for each natural park	165
Figure 3.30. Cumulative assessment of decision-making processes of the management elements	167
Figure 3.31. Cumulative assessment of decision-making processes of the management elements for each natural park	168
Figure 3.32. Cumulative assessment of research, development, and monitoring elements	170
Figure 3.33. Cumulative assessment of research, development, and monitoring elements for each natural park	170
Figure 3.34. Cumulative assessment of outputs elements	173
Figure 3.35. Cumulative assessment of outputs elements for each natural park	173
Figure 3.36. Cumulative assessment of policy environment elements ..	176
Figure 3.37. Cumulative assessment of protected area policies elements	179
Figure 3.38. Cumulative assessment of protected area system level design elements	182
Figure 4.1. The change in pressure elements for 2005, 2009 and 2022 ..	200
Figure 4.2. The change in threat elements for 2005, 2009 and 2022	201
Figure 4.3. The change in the pressures of 2005, 2009 and 2022. (In three periods, the pressure degree of Marmaris NP, Köprülü Canyon NP, Yedigöller NP, Altınbeşik Cave NP, Altındere Valley NP, and Soğuksu NP has increased continuously)	204
Figure 4.4. The change in threats of 2005, 2009 and 2022	205
Figure 4.5. The comparison of biodiversity status of 2005, 2009 and 2022	211
Figure 4.6. The comparison of socio-economic importance status of 2005, 2009 and 2022	215

Figure 4.7. The change in vulnerability context of 2005, 2009 and 2022 (In 2022, the most vulnerable national parks were Marmaris NP, Köprülü Canyon NP, Munzur Mountain NP and Yedi Göller NP. While a regular increase in general was observed in 6 national parks from 2005 to 2022, the vulnerability of Marmaris and Köprülü Canyon National Parks increased continuously in a serious manner)	219
Figure 4.8. The comparison of planning elements of 2005, 2009 and 2022.....	220
Figure 4.9. The change in management planning elements - in the assessments of 2005, 2009 and 2022	222
Figure 4.10. The comparison of the input elements of 2005, 2009 and 2022	223
Figure 4.11. The change in inputs - in the assessments of 2005, 2009 and 2022	225
Figure 4.12. The comparison of the change in processes for the years 2005, 2009 and 2022.....	229
Figure 4.13. The change in processes - in the assessments of 2005, 2009 and 2022.....	231
Figure 4.14. The comparison of output elements of 2005, 2009 and 2022.....	232
Figure 4.15. The change in outputs of 2005, 2009 and 2022.....	234
Figure 4.16. The change in management effectiveness in 2005, 2009 and 2022 assessment periods (Change in Planning, Processes, Inputs and Outputs together)	235
Figure 4.17. The comparison of assessment status at system level for 2005, 2009 and 2022.....	237
Figure 4.18. The comparison of the assessment status of protected area policies of 2005, 2009 and 2022	238
Figure 4.19. The comparison of the assessment status of policy environment of 2005, 2009 and 2022	239
Figure 4.20. The comparison of the protected area system of 2005, 2009 and 2022.....	241
Figure 4.21. The change in pressures of 2009 and 2022.....	244
Figure 4.22. The change in threats of 2009 and 2022.....	245
Figure 4.23. The comparison of biological importance status of 2009 and 2022	247
Figure 4.24. The comparison of socio-economic importance status of 2009 and 2022.....	248
Figure 4.25. The change status in sensitivity of 2009 and 2022	250
Figure 4.26. The change in management planning for 2009 and 2022 assessment years	251

Figure 4.27. The change in inputs for 2009 and 2022 assessment years	252
Figure 4.28. The change in the processes for 2009 and 2022 assessment years	253
Figure 4.29. The change in outputs of 2009 and 2022.....	254
Figure 4.30. General assessment of natural parks management effectiveness in 2009 and 2022	255
Figure 5.1. 36 biodiversity hotspots on Earth	259
Figure 5.2. Distribution of protected areas and OECMs (UNEP-WCMC, 2023)	261
Figure 6.1. The logical framework of the assessment of protected area management effectiveness (Hockings et al., 2006).....	312

TABLES

Table 1.1 RAPPAM methodology description (Karadeniz and Yenilmez Arpa 2022b)	17
Table 2.1. Group distribution for RAPPAM assessment	20
Table 2.2. IUCN list of pressures and threats and list of threats and pressure added in the 2022 assessment (Stanciu, et al., 2010).	22
Table 2.3. Cumulative effect of pressure elements on national parks and distribution of pressure elements to national parks	24
Table 2.4. IUCN pressures and threats list and threat elements added in the 2022 assessment.	33
Table 2.5. Threat elements for national parks and their distribution.	35
Table 2.6. Threat elements and cumulative distribution of threat elements	37
Table 2.7. Biological importance assessment status of forty-five national parks	42
Table 2.8. Assessment score of socio-economic importance	48
Table 2.9. Assessment score of vulnerability-context.....	54
Table 2.10. Assessment score of objectives.....	58
Table 2.11. Assessment score of legal security.....	62
Table 2.12. Assessment score of protected area design and planning.....	66
Table 2.13. Assessment score of staff status.....	70
Table 2.14. Assessment score of communication and information.....	74
Table 2.15. Assessment score of infrastructure status	78
Table 2.16. Assessment score of financing status	82
Table 2.17. Assessment score of the management planning status	87
Table 2.18. Assessment score of decision-making processes in management	91
Table 2.19. Assessment score of research, monitoring and evaluation elements	95
Table 2.20. Assessment score of output elements.....	98
Table 2.21. Assessment score of protected area system level design	102
Table 2.22. Assessment score of protected area policies	106
Table 2.23. Assessment score of policy environment.....	109
Table 3.1. IUCN pressures and threats list and pressures and threats added in the 2022 assessment.....	118

Table 3.2. Cumulative effect of pressure elements on natural parks assessed	119
Table 3.3. Distribution of pressure elements according to each natural park subject to the assessment	123
Table 3.4. IUCN pressures and threats list and threat elements added in the 2022 assessment	125
Table 3.5. Cumulative assessment of threat elements of natural parks ..	126
Table 3.6. Threat elements and their distribution for natural parks	130
Table 3.7. Biological importance assessment elements and assessment status of natural parks	132
Table 3.8. Elements of socio-economic importance and assessment score	136
Table 3.9. Elements of sensitivity-status and assessment score	140
Table 3.10. Elements of objectives and assessment score	143
Table 3.11. Elements of legal security and assessment score	147
Table 3.12. Elements of protected area design and planning and assessment score	150
Table 3.13. Elements of staff and assessment score	153
Table 3.14. Elements of communication-information and assessment score	155
Table 3.15. Elements of infrastructure and assessment score	158
Table 3.16. Elements of financing and assessment score	161
Table 3.17. Elements of management planning and assessment score ..	164
Table 3.18. Elements of decision-making processes of the management and assessment score	167
Table 3.19. Elements of research, development and monitoring and assessment score	169
Table 3.20. Elements of outputs and assessment score	172
Table 3.21. Elements of policy environment and assessment score	175
Table 3.22. Elements of protected area policies and assessment score ..	177
Table 3.23. Elements of protected area policies and assessment score ..	180
Table 4.1. Assessment elements and criteria of the comparison of 2005, 2009 and 2022	184
Table 4.2. Basic information on the assessments of 2005, 2009 and 2022	197
Table 5.1. The general recommendation after the 2009 and 2022 RAPPAM assessment	264
Table 6.1. The priority assessment of effective protected area management	313
Table 6.2. The priority assessment of environment element	313
Table 6.3. The priority assessment of planning element	314

Table 6.4. The priority assessment of process/management element of effective protected area management.....	315
Table 6.5. The priority assessment of input element of effective protected area management	316
Table 6.6. The priority assessment of output element.....	317
Table 6.7. The priority assessment of results element	318
Table 6.8. Action plan for effective protected area management.....	322



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The 2022 RAPPAM assessment of Türkiye's protected areas was conducted within the scope of the Training on Monitoring the Management Effectiveness of Protected Areas in line with request of the National Parks Department, General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. This is because this assessment was conducted for Türkiye's National Parks in 2005 and 2009, and it has not been repeated for a long time. However, it is important that monitoring and assessment studies are conducted systematically. Therefore, the Training on Monitoring the Management Effectiveness of Protected Areas was an opportunity for this assessment. The implementation of the assessment conducted in 2022 as an exemplary assessment not only contributed to the understanding of the current situation of protected areas at the system level, but also provided a better understanding of the trainees by applying this tool. The training was conducted in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. We would like to thank Mustafa BULUT, Deputy General Director of the General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks and the project manager on behalf of the Ministry, for his selfless contribution and support in terms of both the implementation of RAPPAM and the determination of those who will participate in the training and their inclusion to the process, and Tuğba USTA, who is the focal point of the Project on behalf of the General Directorate, Abdulsamet HAÇAT from the project team and all the other members of the project team;

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We hope that this book will be useful to all nature conservationists and nature enthusiasts, and we thank you.

ABBREVIATIONS

EU	European Union
USA	United States of America
BD	Biodiversity
BÜGEM	General Directorate of Plant Production
GDNCNP	General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks
EoH	Enhancing our Heritage-Monitoring and managing for success in World Natural Heritage sites
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environment Facility
DP	Development Plan
Ha	Hectare
HEPP	Hydroelectric Power Plant
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
GPP	Geothermal Power Plant
PA	Protected Area
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
NP	National Park
GDF	General Directorate of Forestry
PAME	Protected Areas Management Effectiveness
RAPPAM	Rapid Assessment and Prioritization of Protected Area Management
WPP	Wind Power Plant
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UCTEA	The Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects

HNP	Historical National Park
TL	Turkish Lira
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
FAT	Foresters' Association of Türkiye
NP	Natural Park
LTDP	Long Term Development Plan
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USD	United States Dollar
WCPA	World Commission on Protected Areas
WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature
WDA	Wildlife Development Area
MP	Management Plan



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Assessment of Protected Areas Management Effectiveness, Implementation Results of Rapid Assessment and Prioritization of Protected Area Management (RAPPAM) 2022 and Comparison with 2005 and 2009 covers the assessment of the management effectiveness of national parks and natural parks managed according to the National Parks Law No. 2873 and the National Parks By-law, comparison of the assessments for 2005 and 2009 with 2022, and suggestions for protected area systems. The purpose of the publication is to guide managers and implementers, to contribute to the systematic assessment of protected areas and to strengthen the management effectiveness of protected areas by comparing the implementation in 2022 with the implementations in 2005 and 2009.

Protected areas are the most effective tool for conserving biodiversity. In addition to conserving natural values, these areas are also a support for increasing nature awareness, rural development, reducing the possible effects of climate change, strengthening cooperation opportunities with many different partner groups, and gaining experiences in nature. Furthermore, protected areas are shelters for genetic resources and guarantees of food security, especially since they also contribute to the protection of gene resources. Therefore, effective area management is very crucial. Effective and sustainable area management also requires legal and administrative regulations, cooperation and collaboration culture, financial and human resources, and of course monitoring and assessment of processes and results. With the assessment of management effectiveness, good and bad situations, needs, and lessons learned are revealed and thus necessary measures are taken as quickly as possible.

The assessment of the management effectiveness of protected areas is defined by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the World Commission for Protected Areas (WCPA), as the assessment of the extent to which the essential values of a protected area are conserved and how well the protected area is managed to achieve its management goals and objectives.

The concept/term of National Park, which was the subject of Forest Law No. 6831 in 1956 in Türkiye, came into the agenda with the declaration of

Yozgat Çamlığı (Pine Grove) National Park in 1958. Approaches to national park practices, which started in 1958, have constantly changed and developed depending on the developments at the global level. Global-level approaches have also been integrated into Türkiye's protected area systems and became widespread. Studies on the assessment of the management effectiveness of protected areas have been conducted through both outsourced projects and the efforts of the main institutions and organizations related to nature conservation, especially since the 2000s.

In particular, the Rapid Assessment and Prioritization of Protected Area Management Method (RAPPAM) and the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) in Protected Areas have been the most effective tools to assess the management effectiveness of protected areas.

The RAPPAM implementation, which started with the assessment of the management effectiveness of 33 national parks in 2005, continued with the assessment of 40 national parks and 30 natural parks in 2009, and in 2022, 45 national parks and 26 natural parks were assessed for the third time.

This publication includes the assessment of 45 national parks and 26 natural parks managed within the scope of National Parks Law No. 2873, using the RAPPAM tool, and deals with the assessments of 2022, 2005 and 2009 comparatively. In addition, through these assessments, it presents suggestions for strengthening the management effectiveness of protected areas by revealing the strengths and weaknesses in conservation and area management.



CONTENT

This book consists of six chapters. The conceptual framework of the RAPPAM methodology is given in the first chapter and, it is aimed at providing an understanding of the RAPPAM assessment tool applied.

In the following chapters, the results of the assessment in 2022 and comparison of the assessment of 2005-2009 and 2022 are given. In addition, 2022 assessment is given separately and comprehensively for both national parks and natural parks.

Recommendations are given in a separate chapter in the publication because of their significance for the future assessments and effective site management. In addition, the lessons learned in the previous years as well as the recommendations are given in detail.

A set of appendixes at the end of the publication provides additional information for decision makers, site managers and planners during the management and assessment processes. In particular, the list experts who participated in the assessment (**APPENDIX -A**) and the list of areas on which RAPPAM was implemented (**APPENDIX -B**) and the RAPPAM form (**APPENDIX -C**) are given. In addition, the results of the workshop on "Determining sustainable area management strategies in Türkiye's protected areas" held on 12-13 June 2013 by the General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks, National Parks Department, Area Management Branch Office are also included. The workshop outputs were presented as an oral presentation by Dr. Nihan YENILMEZ ARPA at the 6th Congress of Landscape Architecture with International Attendance "Discourse and Action" organized by the Chamber of Landscape Architects of UCTEA on 8-11 December 2016 in Antalya.

The study is in the Congress Proceedings Book. The full text is included in pages 311-339 (ISBN: 978-605-01-1040-1). A summary of the study is also given in the publication (**APPENDIX -D**). Ranking for the sections within the RAPPAM tool has been an additional study that was conducted during the assessment in 2022. The results of this case are also included in the annexes as a separate chapter (**APPENDIX -E**). The purpose of ranking the RAPPAM tool is to reveal how important each section of the method is for

Türkiye's protected areas, and for the managers and employees of the site managers.

In terms of content, this book covers the 65-year effort of Türkiye's national parks in different dimensions within the 100-year adventure of the Republic of Türkiye.

This content is open to development and enrichment by those who work on nature conservation and national parks and those who are devoted to it, both today and in the future.

INTRODUCTION

Taking some areas under protection for different purposes goes back thousands of years. For example, in 252 BC, Emperor Asoka of India issued an imperial order to protect animals, fish and forests (Kurdoğlu, 2007). Similarly, there are many examples of royal hunting grounds taken under protection in Europe. The idea of protecting hunting grounds in Europe, areas considered special by societies in the Pacific or sacred tombs in Africa is also incredibly old (Phillips, 2004). It is known that during the Ottoman Empire, the forests, where the wood needs of the palace, armoury or navy were met, were kept under protection and the people were prevented from benefitting from them. The modern movement to designate protected areas started in the mid-1800s. The purpose of the first modern protected areas was to preserve beautiful landscapes or control access to valuable natural resources (Rodrigues and Cazalis, 2020).

When we look at the history of areas protected in today's sense, the first protected area in the world was Yellowstone National Park, which was declared in the United States of America (USA) in 1872. Afterwards, the concept of national parks rapidly spread to the rest of the world. After the USA, the first national park in Australia was declared in 1879 (Sydney National Park; now called Royal National Park), in Canada in 1885 (Banff National Park) and in New Zealand in 1887 (Tangariro National Park). The first national park in Africa was declared in Namibia in 1907, in Sweden in Europe in 1909, and in Uruguay in South America in 1915. On the other hand, the first international convention on nature conservation was the 'Convention for the Protection of Animals, Birds and Fish in Africa' signed in London in 1900 (Caner, 2007).

In the late 19th century, the idea of nature conservation gained significant momentum in European and American countries and many areas were taken under protection and laws were enacted on conservation. In this process, each nation realised that conservation activities only in their own country were not sufficient, that the world ecosystems should be preserved as a whole, and they believed that it was imperative to come together (Yenilmez Arpa, 2011). In this regard, many international meetings were held. The "Congress for the Conservation of the Flora and Fauna of Africa" in London in 1933, where the definition of National Park was made, is of significant importance in this respect (Lockwood et al., 2006).

Subsequently, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) was established in 1948 as an international organisation to protect the integrity and diversity of natural life, to ensure that natural resources are fair and ecologically sustainable, and to raise public awareness on this issue. IUCN is now the world's largest and most comprehensive environmental network, with more than 1,400 member organisations and 15,000 experts drawing on its knowledge, resources, and access¹.

Parallel to these initiatives observed in the world, there are also some initiatives in Türkiye. Throughout history, Turks have paid special attention to trees, nature and living creatures. They planted trees for their children, considered monumental trees sacred, utilised natural plants and protected them. However, the foundations of the first protected area system were laid in the 1950s. The first national park in Türkiye was Yozgat Pine Forest National Park, which was declared in 1958. However, the beginning of the establishment of the protected area system in Türkiye was the Belgrade Conservation Forest declared in 1950 (Karadeniz and Yenilmez Arpa, 2022a).

It is seen that the initiatives that initially regulated the utilisation were later focussed on strict protection by declaring protected areas. However, the pressure of increasing population and environmental demands has made it necessary to change these initiatives and approaches.

In 1987, in the document "Our Common Future" (Brundtland Report) prepared by the World Commission on Environment and Development, it was clearly stated that "most of the efforts made so far to sustain human progress, meet its needs and fulfil its expectations have been unsustainable initiatives". Again, it was emphasised that "humanity has the power to make development sustainable, without denying future generations the ability to meet their own needs while ensuring that resources are sufficient for present needs". For this purpose, urgent steps to be taken at both national and global level have been defined. Expansion of protected areas for the in-situ conservation of species and ecosystems affected by several reasons and strengthening co-operation with interest groups for the conservation of resource values were stated as one of the steps to be taken (Yenilmez Arpa, 2011).

¹ www.iucn.org