

Problems Encountered in Protected Area Management in Turkey

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Aim of the study: The aim of this study is to put forward the protection statues in the protected areas of Turkey, to evaluate the problems encountered in the protection and management of these areas and to propose solutions.

Material and Methods: In this study; the protection statutes of these areas in Turkey have been researched and problems in protection strategies have been presented. In consequence of the implementation problems in these statues by different institutions, the inter-institutional coordination deficiencies are assessed and the problems that the protected areas face within the scope of legal legislation are discussed. Besides, the boundaries of protected areas are determined by Remote Sensing (RS) and Geographical information Systems (GIS) technologies and compared with existing boundaries. As a result, a region declared as protected area, borders, protection statues and management mechanism are evaluated according to related literature information and suggestions for effective protection and management are presented.

Results: Important natural areas in Turkey are protected with 11 different protection statuses. Protected area types and numbers are Protected area types and numbers are consist of 40 national parks, 184 nature parks, 107 natural monuments, 31 nature protection area, 80 wildlife development areas, 58 conservation forests, 1273 natural sites, 16 special environmental protection areas, 14 ramsar areas, 1 biosphere reserve and 11 world heritage sites. Sometimes, several protection statuses are given for a single area. Some of these protection statutes are declared in accordance with our national legislation, and some are based on international contracts. The main problem in these areas is complexity of authority between institutions. For example, for two different status protected areas with overlapping borders, the two competent authorities are implementing different protection strategies. This poses a problem for the sustainability and management of the protected area. The decision-making mechanism for the assets in the protection areas is on the initiative of different institutions extending the decision-making process. Therefore, this situation prevents the execution of services related to the region effectively. Another main problem is that protected area boundaries are determined without regard to natural thresholds. In this context, RS and GIS technologies are not used effectively. In addition, the people of the region do not know why and how the area is protected. As a recommendation, protected areas and boundaries should be clearly defined with experts and GIS technologies. Participation of the people in all processes should be ensured. Frame protection action plans to cover all protection areas should be prepared. The management mechanism should be established with the participation of relevant institutions, universities, non-governmental organizations, media and local people.

Keywords: Protection statues, biodiversity, national and international legislation, RS and GIS technologies, nature protection areas, sustainable biodiversity