Climate-Resilient and Sustainable Coastal Governance: Dalyan–İztuzu–Köyceğiz Lake Basin

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Abstract

Coastal areas and wetlands are among the ecosystems most vulnerable to the combined impacts of climate change and human activities. The Dalyan–İztuzu–Köyceğiz Lake Basin is an important natural and cultural landscape encompassing wetlands, coastal ecosystems, historical and archaeological heritage, fishing and tourism activities, and sea turtle nesting sites. However, the basin faces various environmental and social pressures arising from intensive tourism activities and the impacts of climate change.

This study focuses on developing a participatory coastal governance model to ensure the sustainable and climate-resilient conservation and use of the Dalyan–İztuzu–Köyceğiz Lake Basin. The project's central approach is that decisions concerning the conservation of the basin should be developed and implemented not solely through administrative regulations but also through the participation of economic and social stakeholders operating in the region.

Preliminary research conducted in the basin has identified uncertainties among stakeholders regarding the implementation of existing regulations. Accordingly, the project aims to establish a shared governance mechanism through a process of consultation and negotiation involving local authorities, public institutions, tourism businesses, fishers, civil society organisations, and other relevant stakeholders.

The second component of the proposed model involves establishing an AI-based interactive digital observatory supported by information collected from different stakeholders. This platform is intended to monitor environmental, economic, and social processes within the basin, identify emerging challenges, and facilitate the continuous improvement of the governance mechanism based on the data obtained.

The international project proposal, currently being developed with the participation of researchers from Türkiye, Italy, and Argentina, aims to bring together experiences in coastal management from different countries. The long-term objective is to enable the participatory governance approach developed for the Dalyan–İztuzu–Köyceğiz Lake Basin to be adapted to other coastal regions with similar ecological and social characteristics.

Keywords: Coastal governance, climate resilience, wetlands, participatory management, Dalyan–Köyceğiz.

MİDUG Thematic Area: WP2 – Coastal Areas, Wetlands, and Climate Adaptation Governance.