

Marine protection in hot spot archipelago near Istanbul Metropolitan area: Current status and future solutions

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Metropolises struggle to balance coastal protection and development. One of the most important problems of metropolitan areas is the challenges among the socioeconomic needs, urbanization and sustainability of environment. The regulation and management of ever continuing human pressure on the ecosystem requires a well-functioning network among many government institutions and stakeholders to prevent deterioration of ecosystem. Prince's Islands, as one of the historical and remaining natural reserves of the Istanbul Metropolitan area, with necessity of strict protection measures, while enabling urban development to support the needs and trade of the archipelago's residents. The Archipelago constitutes a biodiversity hotspot due to the proximity to mainland and geological and bathymetrical features. The region is threatened by pressure increasing with the population rise such as; deep discharge of domestic and industrial waste, urbanization, land fill and coastal construction. In this context, we organized a workshop entitled "Marine Protection in the Shadow of Urbanization: Prince's Islands Case" with the participation of NGO's, citizens, policy makers, business representatives and researchers. Dedicated workshop was a part of MARINA project which is funded by EU H2020 programme. Political, economic, social, technological and environmental measures for protecting the marine ecosystem around the Archipelago were discussed. Feedback from the participants provided main outputs of the workshop to generate a road map for sustainable environmental economy in Prince's Island. The main goals of the road map were defined as monitoring ecosystem, bringing into force control mechanisms, promoting responsibility via social events and raising public awareness.

Keywords: sustainable ecosystem, archipelago, public awareness, Sea of Marmara

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