

The governance of coastal regions in turkey and local environment councils

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Coasts as a source of numerous economic and social benefits for people with their characteristics and coastal eco-system are under great pressure due to population increase, industrialization, urbanization, and tourism activities of our day. While this pressure is causing the spoilage of coastal eco-system, coasts themselves are the biggest mean of water and sea pollution. That is why, both in the world and in Turkey, it is utmost important to protect the natural structure of the coastline and it's eco-system, and to use those areas without causing sea and water pollution. It's also obligatory to protect the coastline in the direction of sustainable development idea

The most important problem encountered in coastal regions governance today, generally in Turkey and especially in Muğla, is the overlapping authority of too many public institutions and organizations. Consequently, there exists a coordination problem in coastal governance. There are coastline related clauses in many laws, by-laws and regulations in Turkey.

Consequently, it is obvious that organizational processes ascribe authority and responsibility to various public bodies. This concept obstructs the integrated work and make difficult to coordinate the activities aiming the common objectives of all institutions, on the other hand. With this reason, inappropriate structuring, sea and water pollution, destruction of naturel eco-system in coastal region come forward as results which are opposite to the idea of sustainability.

Coordination problem is more obvious at the provincial level, because the executive units of public authorities that are responsible of coastal regions and their hinterland structuring are embodied within the provincial structure. Among those activities run at the provincial level, it is known that environmental protection and development concept is covered by the objection field of more than one public authority. In this respect, a body called "Local Environment Council" was structured under the chairmanship of governors in provinces to synchronize the provincial level environmental activities.

Local Environment Council were first founded in Turkey in accordance with the law -2872 approved in 1983. The most senior public authority (governor) chairs these provincial level councils and decides the provincial objection fields for the council, while high level officials are implementing those decisions. In addition, related professional chambers and local managers are included in the council structure. The council's activities are also open to non governmental organizations (NGO) and it's possible to invite other public officials when needed by the council. In this way, the structure of Local Environment Council and its responsibilities give opportunity to all kind of activities at provincial level to be run effectively and simultaneously. On the other hand this structure forms a base for "Governance" implementation which is on the recent agenda of Local Environment Council.

It is possible for all parts (Private Environment Group, Municipality, harbour management, Coastguard, non governmental organizations etc.) to convene, produce joint decisions and form an implementation plan for those decisions, under the umbrella of this council. In this way, decisions about coastal regions can be taken and implemented by the related authorities in coordination.