

# ***G.A.S.-Der***

**GÖKOVA-AKYAKA'YI SEVENLER DERNEĞİ**

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**Dear members,**

**Welcome to the 13<sup>th</sup> General Meeting of the Friends of Gökova- Akyaka.**

However much we informed our members according to their specific wish, by sending regular newsletters, we still published this official document in form of a booklet to present our biannual work.

This year we celebrate the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of our association. Over this time G.A.S.-Der has become an organisation that is taken seriously, is respected and recognized as stabile and competent on national and international platforms. 15 years is a significant period. The fact that other organisations are using our work as sources thus making it sustainable and durable, is a serious success (see: 1.1.5).

We want to start our 13<sup>th</sup> General Meeting with a 'first'. We want to thank these members who have given us continuous support from the founding until today, paid their fees uninterruptedly, have always been reachable, helpful and steadfast: **Ali Şahin, Doğan (Saloş) Yılmaz, Ethem Bilgin, Hüseyin Türkoğlu, Kemal Şahin, Levent Gölçüklü, Zeynep and Fahir Berker, Muammar Tomsan, Nuran and Orhan İskit, Nurullah Gencel and Yaşar Gencel**. And we want to show our gratefulness and consideration with a specially prepared certificate to these board members, who have given their time and efforts uninterruptedly to the association from the first period until now: **Mehmet Datça, Mustafa Taşkesiği and Naci Kaya**.

## **2004- 2006 WORK PERIOD**

### **1. BİO- GÖKOVA PROJECT (last phase: September '04- December '05)**

As most of you know we have successfully finished our Bio-Gökova Project in December 2005, which we had launched in 2001 with the support of UNDP GEF/SGP. Of course we will continue to work on issues like Sustainable Agriculture and Tourism. We are rather regarding this project as a beginning. As an association we will strive to continue the project activities as far as our budget allows and have agreed on a board decision accordingly. We are also planning to write small projects and apply for support on activities that we are unable to sustain.

#### **1.1 Activities**

### 1.1.1 Meetings

We participated in two meetings in the course of the capacity building program of the project, one in Kayseri, the other in Izmir. Besides this, in March 2005, we took part in the GEF/SGP Project Meeting as coordinators of a closing project, who had successfully reached most of the project objectives.

### 1.1.2 Research

The biodiversity of the Gökova region has been researched and reported. Required research subjects had already been defined during the preparation process of the project as future contribution to the Gökova Environmental Master Plan together with the APSA:

- a) "A Comparative Study of the Biodiversity of the Micro Ecosystems of Eucalypt and Liquidambar orientalis Forests"
- b) "The Activity Patterns, Home Ranges of Wild Boar (*Sus scrofa*) of the Gökova Plain and their Effects on Agricultural Crops"
- c) "Breeding Sites of Mosquitoes in the Gökova Basin"
- d) "The Effect of burning Reeds on the Ecology of the Gökova Plain"
- e) "Determination of the Flora on the Gökova Slopes"
- f) "Fauna Inventory of the Gökova Basin and Breeding Bird Atlas"
- g) "The Usage of the Gökova Wetland and Alternative Tourism Possibilities"
- h) "Erosion Problems and possible Solutions of the Gökova Natural Protected Site"

In the moment all reports are redacted we hope that they will be published until New Year as parts of the association's newly established 'Scientific Series'.

### 1.1.3 Organic Agriculture

During the last period we organised meetings with the help of our consultant Aydın Özdemir with sesame farmers interested in organic agriculture. On these meetings contemporary problems of Turkey's agriculture were discussed also. Our farmer friends told us about their own difficulties and their adversities with contracted agriculture. Sometimes representatives of companies selling agricultural products participated as well. Everybody agreed on the farmers having to gain their certificates themselves. The Ula District Governor Ali Osman Canbaba showed some interest in these meetings, too and mentioned that the farmers approach might be an issue for the EU's SMAP III Program. Regrettably these activities have not been eligible for this program and could not be supported.

Nevertheless organic agriculture has been an important outcome of the Bio-Gökova Project and inciting further sustainable development. On Turkey's course towards EU accession the agricultural sector will be uncompetitive and one of the farmer's possibilities to continue production will be organic agriculture. Up to date more than 40 of our farmers are changing to organic production on a total of 617.76 acres of land and the co operational body they want to found will give them the opportunity to answer their needs and to strengthen their competitive power. For us who we working for nature protection, ecologic balance is a priority matter. It is a fact that chemicals and pesticides are having a negative effect on the rich flora and fauna of the Gökova Ecosystem. Polluted aquifers, constantly decreasing numbers of wild animal species, some already disappeared completely...To live in an intact nature is everybody's right. Therefore we give priority to organise support from the most

experienced organisation Buğday Derneği to cooperate with these farmers, who need support for their organic agriculture approach. In any case our association has found a workgroup for organic agriculture (see 3.2).

#### **1.1.4 Sustainable Tourism/ Development**

##### **1.1.4.1 Stork Village Project and Stork Walks/ Akçapınar**

We are counting White Storks in the village of Akçapınar since the year 1986. The last years we have turned these counts into a Bio-Gökova Project activity, taking place in April each year. Regrettably we could not organise the Stork Walks in 2005 and 2006. In 2005 we made a short pre expedition to assess the status quo and have to sadly announce that the nesting colony in the Eucalypt Trees on the road side has been completely destroyed by cutting the trees. Because of insensitivities like this the White Stork population has significantly decreased by now. Meanwhile the media interest in these Storks we had awoken over the last years lead to the national TV (TRT) asking us repeatedly for the dates of the Stork Walks. We had to give them a negative answer. Furthermore we had to inform our partners (The Bird Research Society/ KAD and the Provincial Directorate for Environment and Forestry) about the state of the colony and the low census. Grievously the village of Akçapınar has lost a possibility for real sustainable tourism, caused by a lack of susceptibility of its own inhabitants. However we plan to continue our local approaches in a team work effort together with KAD.

##### **1.1.4.2 Nature Walks as Preparation to the Walking Guide Book/ Gökova Basin**

One of the solutions on the base of sustainable development being developed by the Bio-Gökova Project, carried out with the support of UNDP GEF/SGP, has been the development of an alternative tourism. As a first incentive for a proper and responsible tourism- an approach we also carried into our Akyaka VISION process and have always lobbied, we prepared and published a trilingual Walking Guide named ‘Step by Step Gökova’, introducing the natural and cultural values of our region on 18 walks, including a map of the region and a city plan of Akyaka. The first edition complies 5000 books and we have started to distribute them complementarily.

The preparations for the guide book, like mapping, photographing and collecting information had been made during the winter season of 2004. We organised for example a nature walk to the Gökçe part of the plain and walks along the Ula Canyon, the antique road from Ula to Yeşilova and the old Roman road through the plain. These walks were used as well as reference and evaluation work for the guide book.

In summer participation dropped because of the heat, but in October we organised two more walks. Furthermore our member Jane Patterson made the effort to prepare up to scale city plans for Akyaka and Akçapınar.

We announced this book with pride as ‘OUR product’, because it has been the result of a high spirited, effective team work effort of quite a big group of people from the first idea to the work schedule, to up to scale maps, walk descriptions, illustrations up to the delivery to the printer! We could finally complementarily present it to the public in the year 2005. We want to thank again everybody who helped preparing and gave support to the guide book.

Regrettably 4 of the 18 walks have lost their attraction in this short period of time:

1) The antique mosaic of Haşimbahçe has been destroyed by a bulldozer. The petition we sent to the Protection Directorate remained without result. What would it have changed anyway after the destruction?

2) The population of the White Stork colony in Akçapınar has much decreased after the trees have been cut down. The plans and explanations we gave are not valid any longer.

3) The park and forest area in the centre of Akyaka has been ‘spring cleaned’ of shrubs and creepers. Hundreds of bird nests are lost, globally protected plants have been partly destroyed, Akyaka’s atmosphere has changed.

4) The natural miracle known as the Ula Canyon is in peril. We heard that a stone mill is planned in the entry of the canyon. The local population has approached our association for support. We are working on a signature campaign for a petition to the concerned departments.

### **1.1.5 Contemporary Mosquito Combat**

In 2004 and 2005 a team of one volunteer each of the Ula Central Policlinic, the Akyaka Poliklinik, the Municipality and our association has continuously worked each months, reporting and disinfecting all closed areas like the sewage system, the rubbish dump and pools. During these summers the overall mosquito population in Akyaka has been very low. We have been attacked by a different species of Mosquitoes for one week in August. Combat possibilities against this species have to be researched.

Furthermore after the breeding areas had been researched and determined we published a hand book named “Do you breed mosquitoes?”, which we distributed on meetings all trough the basin. Because we made it known in the internet, the booklet has been demanded from diverse places. Besides this the Municipalities of Kocaeli İzmir and İzmit/Saraybahçe have used and recognized our publication with our permission as source for their own brochures. We had not expected so much interest. A new edition will be needed shortly.

## **1.2 Outcomes, Impacts, Plans:**

### **1.2.1 Publications**

By now we are applying to the Ministry for Culture and Tourism for an ISBN number for each of the association’s publications. Up to date we have published the Guide Book and two reports. All of our books, brochures etc are available from our office.

In the moment we are working on the field research reports of the Bio-Gökova Project. After that we want to publish a series guide books for Flora, Fauna and Ecologic Living. Meanwhile our developing and broadening publication department is supported by our experienced Publication Officer Nurhan Kavuzlu, whom we want to thank for her efforts herewith.

### **1.2.2 Team Work Efforts and Workgroups as Outcomes of the Project**

The workgroups that have been founded during the project process are continuing their work. Their activities are listed under point 3.

As we mentioned we want to cooperate with other organisation on some subjects. Among these subjects is White Stork Protection, Organic Agriculture etc. Our bird work in

the province of Muğla is carried out anyway by contract and in cooperation with Doğa Derneği.

These activities are a statement of the continuity and sustainability of our project and evidence of the benefits of our work.

The activities of our UNDP GEF/ SGP supported Bio-Gökova Project are finally finished. The last work has been carried out in 2005. Reporting has been one of the most important issues. Of course the effects of such a major project are still noticeable.

One of them is the carefully prepared VISION process, which we are living and trying to keep alive.

## **2. VISION PROCESSES (Financed completely by the G.A.S.-Der UNDP GEF/SGP Bio- Gökova Project)**

### **2.1 Events:**

G.A.S.-Der and the Municipality of Akyaka have made an agreement to better organise the working environment for further development. Therefore we started a comprehensive process in summer 2004 to make our mutual dream about a new life style in Akyaka, or rather the Gökova Basin, come true and began to work defining the required elements for the tourism and development we wanted. Work schedules and subjects have all been shaped in total consent. It might be useful to remember the steps of the process:

- 1- A constant exchange of ideas between the Municipality and the Association
- 2- Meeting and call for official support (state departments) with the region's concerned decision makers (3<sup>rd</sup> October 2004)
- 3- Meeting (workshop) with representatives of the private sector and the cooperatives (Akyaka VISION, 4-5<sup>th</sup> November 2004)
- 4- Separate meetings on strategic planning of the Municipality and the Association (December 2004),
- 5- Association VISION Workshop (G.A.S.- Der VISION, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2005),
- 6- Meetings with the general public by the Municipality and the Association (from January 2005 on)

-later on we concurrently added the idea of much needed yearly "Evaluation Meetings" to assess the development of the process and organised the first meeting with ample participation in October 2005. We gave priority to participants who took part in the whole of the process and accordingly sent invitations to members and concerned parties. We believe that applying this method we reach better results, because participants are familiar with the process from the beginning and reach correct and effective decisions with more ease.

But let's come back to the VISION Process:

In cooperation with the Municipality we organised a Round Table Meeting for the Province Government and the Representatives of all concerned Province Departments (Process Subject 2). Firstly we presented the plans we had for the development of the region. Then we discussed what kind of support we could get from the State Departments and shaped potential cooperation. Priority of the meeting was given to reach a consent about the use and protection of the Gökova SPA, the subject of highest interest for us. It was decided that for future development a participatory master plan was needed. The meeting was also very important to better communications between our association and the State Departments. The association's research capacity were met with great satisfaction and the meeting came to the decision that our research results will form an important part of the future master plan.

Afterwards we organised a workshop with the representatives of the private sector, cooperatives, municipality and association in November 2004 (Process Subject 3). For reaching the workshop objective to answer the question “What kind of Akyaka do we want to see 10 years from now?” we invited Selen Akhuy (Management Consultant, Professional Facilitator) to manage the meeting. After two days the participants agreed on a VISION manifest and signed it in front of the media to show their consent. The mutual pride on the end of the meeting was tangible. The workshop was a very nice example of a real local solution.

Meanwhile G.A.S.-Der organised several meetings on strategic planning (Process Subject 4). Decision on a general strategy were of course taken by the association’s board members. We do not know on what level the municipality process has halted.

As a result of these revised strategies we organised an association VISION workshop on the 6<sup>th</sup> January 2005, to adept the association policies to the now altered Akyaka and gave participation priority to members who had partaken in the Akyaka VISION as well (Process Subject 5). The object of this workshop has been to reach a mutual vision thus giving the association’s work a new direction and revise the organisation’s policies together with active and interested members.

All of these workshops have been very well organised using professional methods. Analyses and results have been quite satisfactory, correct and gave us a possibility to define a future on mutual consent.

## **2.2 Outcomes and Effects:**

The outcome of the workshop (January 2005) compiles two parts as written below. The first part consists of the Akyaka VISION, since we totally agree with this manifest. We see the organisational vision as a statement according to the changed circumstances of the town.

### ***G.A.S.- Der VISION:***

In an Akyaka that has  
protected its natural and architectural structure,  
perfected its infrastructure,  
leads a vivid social and cultural life,  
unites communal values and-  
shares this richness all year round with its visitors...

our NGO  
has gained expertise in the protection of natural and cultural heritages,  
operates from its own properties,  
has united with the people by furthering public participation in social, cultural and educational events,  
is open to interaction,  
has constituted an alternative regional life style through its environmental knowledge,  
has become an organisation of global format through strong and intensive communication skills.

### **Mission:**

The Society of the Friends of Gökova-Akyaka works towards an auto-protection mechanism of the region in cooperation with the people of the basin, using its own organisational structure for regional activities;

- \*by organising educational activities to further people's sensitivity towards nature and environment
- \*by cooperating with the people of the region to sustain the society's activities
- \*by taking a lead role through scientific work, especially concerning nature protection
- \*by doing research and consultation and sharing the results
- \*by cooperating on national and international level
- \*by networking on national and international level to keep its work updated
- \*by producing and coordinating projects for a sustainable and nature protecting development

### **2.3 Plans:**

To determine our plans we think it useful to once again remind ourselves of the meaning of a vision process and what its effects should be. A vision statement manifests the principles and direction a person, department, company or organisation should take in a certain period of time (5, 10, 50 years) to reach its ideal objectives. This manifest, the document itself serves as a handbook, a guide by defining the main issues, the ethic and the working principles of the entity. Working on a certain subject the vision policy will give an answer to the question of a right or wrong approach. Therefore special attention has to be paid to solid and concrete outcomes. A vision has to be updated if external factors change.

All the results of the workshops should have been presented to the people on public meeting by the participants and they should have made sure that the public understood the meaning and support the outcomes. Regrettably, the proudly signed VISION manifest has not been acknowledged and transported with the same pride.

G.A.S.-Der organised a 'Vision Evaluation Meeting' in October 2005. As an organisation we will go on with these annual workshops until the people who signed the vision manifest will own up to their signatures.

Furthermore we plan to have another major meeting in winter 2006/7 to ponder over the vision, to adept strategic planning to the outcomes and to define work schedules and subjects according to the revised policies.

### **3. G.A.S.-Der ORGANISATIONAL PROCESS**

The foundation of the NGO's organisational process has been laid by the outcomes of the vision process, anyhow necessary to work effectively and sound. Besides this we have to comply with the new NGO Law and revise some principles.

The results of the SWOT analyses (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threads) during the G.A.S.-Der VISION Workshop gave priority to the NGO's 'Professionalism', 'Stability' and 'Nature Protection' on the strong side. The weak side showed, as we had expected 'Lack of Communication', 'Weak Participation' and 'Image Problems'.

We have to brace ourselves and prepare to finally wipe out some prejudices against our organisation. Some of the workshop participants and other local civil initiatives share this approach. We have been especially interesting in new cooperation, researching new contacts and generally put an effort into these subjects. The results have been quite satisfying. To work more detailed on some subjects we have founded three different work groups. Even if these groups generally work on different strategies and issues, the one point uniting them is the possibility to work ‘under the roof’ of our NGO, enabling them to use our organisation, coordination and other abilities. To preserve the platform character of the groups we decided that not all of the work group participants have to be members, but gave authority solely to people who are members of G.A.S.-Der. For us it is enough to give the people of the basin the possibility to recognise us and to make use of an active and well equipped NGO. The association takes the role of a general facilitator in this scheme.

These formation’s first steps have been made in summer 2005, still we have to solve some management problems. We plan to work on concrete solutions with the work groups as soon as possible. Last but not least we want to thank all of the work groups for their high motivation and quality work.

Authority and Assignments of the newly formed groups:

### **3.1 G.A.S.-Der Women Group (KG)**

Chair:	Nevin Arpınar
Vice Chair:	Hasibe Salar
Accountancy Officer:	Bedia Erdem
Accountancy Vice Officer:	Mükerrem Şahin

G.A.S.-Der KG’s objective is mainly the organisation of social events, excursions, and of course, events for women. Among their activities up to date have been excursions to Fethiye, Dalyan, Pamukkale and Cappadocia and festive events for the World Women’s Day and Mother’s Day. We thank our industrious Women Group and wish them further success in their work.

### **3.2 G.A.S.-Der Organic Agriculture Work Group (OTÇG)**

Coordinator:	Salih Armutçuoğlu
Officer:	Mehmet Pekmezci
Officer:	Hüseyin Türkoğlu
Consultant:	Aydın Özdemir

G.A.S.-Der OTÇG is organising its work in the moment to start organic agriculture. We plan to widen our approach from already organically produced dry crops to fresh products, too. We sincerely thank our farmers for striving to ensure a healthier life for all of us and wish them much success.

### **3.3 G.A.S.-Der Stray Animals Work Group (SHÇG)**

Officer:	Yasemin İlseven
Officer:	Anita Dehninger- Baumeister

The work of G.A.S.-Der SHÇG is actually coordinated by us and the municipality. Our NGO is organising the work, public relations and helping to produce required material. The municipality is covering the financial side of things. To protect the legal and organisational aspects of working with stray animals a comprehensive strategic contract between NGO and municipality has been signed. We plan to make the principles of this work known by preparing a brochure over the next months. Until now the document is available from our office. We want to specially thank the people in charge, who are carrying out their difficult task without a grudge and being fed up. We also want to thank the owner of the Ortaca Güney Ege Newspaper for his contribution of 1.5t dried food to the strays of our town.

#### **4. COOPERATIONS AND COMMUNICATION WORK (September 2004- September 2006)**

4.1 We had some preparation meetings with a Greek Biologist about a possible Turkish/ Greek Interreg III project. Since cross-border project development is quite difficult we do not have any results yet.

For a similar project we have been in contact with the Marmaris National Park Department. Because the department having the same complications as we had, their project has not been realised.

4.2 We have been invited and participated on the first meeting of the “Köyceğiz-Dalyan APSA Biodiversity Assessment and Master Plan Project” and will naturally be interested in the ongoing project.

4.3 We entertained a Turkish/ German group working on nature tourism and also went birding with them on our plain.

4.4 We guided a group of birders from the Izmir EgeDoğa Derneği and discussed further cooperation possibilities with them. We are naturally in good contact anyhow with this ‘neighbour’ NGO.

4.5 We are having a cooperation contract with the national NGO Doğa Derneği, which is supporting our bird work, which we usually carry out together.

4.6 We are participating regularly on the monthly consultant board meetings of the EU Gökova Project which is mutually carried out by the Muğla University, MedCoast and the Municipality of Akyaka (“Preparation and Implementation of the Integrated Management Action Plan in Collaboration with Stakeholders for the Inner Gökova Bay and the Sedir Island within Gökova Specially Protected Area”). Furthermore we are taking part in the sub project work groups with quite a number of members. Ideally we wanted to participate with 2 people in each of the groups. To keep up the quality standard of our NGO we wanted the participants to be on top of the subjects, stakeholders, interested, knowledgeable and active. Up to date we are active with 2 attendants each in 2 groups and one each in the others:

- 1- Sedir Island Master Plan = Neşe Hisar Yalçın
- 2- Gökova Inner Bay Beaches Master Planı = Thomas Schmitz, Salih Armutçuoğlu
- 3- Nature Protection Master Plan = Bahar Suseven
- 4- River Master Plan = Nurhan Kavuzlu
- 5- Gökova Bay Family Fishing Master Plan = Samet Yaşar

- 6- Water Quality and Solid Waste Master Plan = Dr. Erdoğan Karşlıođlu, Naci Kaya
- 7- Public Awareness and Education = Safinaz Karakuyu

We wish our officers much success in their work.

- 4.6 On the last general meeting you have wished for better communication between board and members. We hope we could satisfy this wish with the newsletters we have started to send regularly after the last meeting.
- 4.7 We have participated in a series of workshops in the framework of the EU Eco Citizenship Project. We have found ourselves in a lively information and experience exchange with the participants of the other NGOs from three countries (Turkey, Bulgaria, Greece).

## 5. NAİL ÇAKIRHAN AND HALET ÇAMBEL CULTURE AND ARTHOUSE

The exhibition openings and the interest shown to them by local and foreign visitors have become the crown of our efforts. Furthermore do they carry a social dimension besides honouring the exhibitions and the artists. Every two weeks for half of the year they offer the attendants a possibility to meet each other. Because we became used to meet and talk we organised Conversation Meetings during the winter of 2005/ 06. Since most of the artists and their friends are coming from outside of the province by now, we re contributing to Akyaka's tourism as well. The artists, their friends and other interested visitors stay for at least 10 days in town.

We cordially thank Thomas Schmitz because of contributing to art and tourism by coordinating and organising all of the exhibition work since many years, with great effort and success.

Our chairwoman has visited Nail Çakırhan and Halet Çambel twice and they wanted you to know how happy and grateful they are for the successful management of Thomas Schmitz, making the Culture and Art House more important and bigger every year.

### **5.1 Exhibitions 2004**

We have expanded the season 2004 and organised a total of 12 exhibitions. Eight of them were of artists mostly not having had exhibitions in Akyaka before, the other four dealt with the region's nature, archaeology and diverse project subjects.

#### **2004 Exhibition Program:**

21.05 - 30.05	ÇYDD Muđla Group Exhibition
04.06 - 13.06	İrene Cantez & Bahar Suseven
18.06 - 27.06	Dineke Mühürdarođlu
02.07 - 11.07	Zühra Kırımgeri
16.07 - 25.07	T. Yalçınmer & Y. Dincer-Yalçınmer
30.07 - 08.08	Yılmaz Tankut
13.08 - 22.08	Mehmet Bildirici
27.08 - 05.09	Erdoğan Özmen
10.09 - 19.09	Aziz Albek
24.09 - 03.10	Ü. Onur & B. Mühürdarođlu
08.10 - 17.10	Gölnur Efendiođlu

22.10 - 31.10 N. Bozkurt & B. Oyman

## 5.2 Exhibitions 2005

For the season 2005 we received 14 applications and we opened the salon doors with Feride Dağlı's water colour exhibition on the 20<sup>th</sup> May. Until the 30<sup>th</sup> September we had the chance to see 12 different exhibitions, some of them photographs, others plastic art. For this year we published a trilingual exhibition catalogue, giving details about the artists and the program.

### 2005 Exhibition Program:

20.05 - 29.05	Feride Dağlı/ Paintings
03.06 - 12.06	"Birds"/ Photographs/ Group
17.06 - 26.06	Bronzhane/ Bronze Plastics
01.07 - 10.07	Çiğdem Meral/ Paintings
15.07 - 24.07	Hikmet Öz/ Paintings
29.07 - 07.08	Mediha Gerez Çakmak/ Paintings
12.08 - 21.08	Işık Soyturk/ Photographs
26.08 - 04.09	Cem Sağbil/ Bronze Plastics
09.09 - 18.09	Svetlana İnaç/ Paintings
23.09 - 02.10	Tülin Çiftçi/ Paintings
07.10 - 16.10	Mücella Küçükalpelli/ Paintings
21.10 - 30.10	Ayten Taşpınar/ Paintings

## 5.3 Exhibitions 2006

The exhibition catalogue of 2006 has been a piece of art itself, colourful and of high quality. The salon opened on the 19<sup>th</sup> May with Muhittin Köroğlu's caricatures. Until the 29<sup>th</sup> October we had 12 different exhibitions, among them photographs and ceramics.

### 2006 Exhibition Program:

19.05 - 28.05	Muhittin Köroğlu / Caricatures
02.06 - 11.06	B. Oyman / N. Bozkurt / Ceramic
16.06 - 25.06	Dineke Mühürdaroğlu / Paintings
30.06 - 09.07	Nevin Ünal / Paintings
14.07 - 23.07	Sevgi Aktur Atölye / Paintings / Group
28.07 - 06.08	Mehmet Bildirici / Photographs
11.08 - 20.08	Georgeta Ionel Gözen / Paintings
25.08 - 03.09	Emel Gülsoy / Paintings
08.09 - 17.09	Ülkü Onur / Paintings
22.09 - 01.10	Ayten Timuroğlu / Paintings
06.10 - 15.10	Ebru Baran Burcuoğlu / Paintings
20.10 - 29.10	Akyaka Sanat Merkezi / Paintings / Plastics /Mosaic and other art

The openings are on the first day of the exhibitions at 18.00h (in Ramadan at 16.00h). Everybody is invited.

Every year we are having a good spring cleaning and some maintenance work before the season starts. In 2005 we repaired the front gate as well. Before the season we finally had

to take down the old wooden stairs and renovated the entrance in 2006. Since the salon is visited by 1000s of people every year, we had to redesign the new stairs and planned to have them made from stone. Our chairwoman visited Nail Çakırhan in Istanbul in December 2005 and discussed the design with him. For their support and the completion of these works we thank Hamdi Yücel Gürsoy and Nurullah Gencil very much.

## **6. OTHER WORK**

### **6.1. GÖK- KUŞ- AĞI (The Gökova Birders Communication Network/ Bird Work)**

We first started working on the Turkey Bird Breeding Atlas with our network group in April 2004 and continue to partly do so even after financial support had finished.

The concerned state departments are finally recognizing the results of our NGO's 'Muğla Wetlands Monitoring and Active Protection Project'.

We participated in two meetings in Ankara to define the standards of Turkish birding data.

In August 2004 we organized a national birders meeting in Akyaka in cooperation with Doğa Derneği. Subject has been the protection strategies of IBAs (Important Bird Areas). The representatives of birding groups from all over Turkey had a productive meeting as well as a good time in Akyaka.

With great sorrow we have to announce that the birding community has lost two members and friends. Ian Richardson finally lost his fight against leukaemia and Fazilet Üker was killed much too young in a terrible car accident. We wish our condolences to their families.

### **6.2 Conversation Meetings**

As we mentioned in point 5, we organised biweekly conversation meetings in winter to substitute the exhibition openings. The meetings usually did not have a special objective, but were rather occasions to get acquainted and to talk, if needed topics were selected. We started in December 2005 in the Azmakkapı Restaurant and continued in the breakfast salon of the Hotel Gökova. Some of the topics that came up:

- Where does Akyaka's new tourism understanding go? In the right or wrong direction?
- Akyaka's history and people leaving a footprint
- Bird Flu and precautions
- Akçapınar Beach, waste problems, Akyaka River Road
- The incorrect cleaning of the forest area in front of the municipality building
- Cutting trees under the pretext of pruning
- Contemporary Mosquito Combat

### **6.3 Celebrations of Special Days**

On 4-5-6<sup>th</sup> June 2004 we organised some events in the framework of the World Environment Day. On the first we played environmental educational games with the school children on the Atatürk Square. As rewards we distributed educational books. The second day had an opening of a nature orientated exhibition and a presentation about the project, sustainable agriculture and mosquito combat for the inhabitants of Akyaka/ İnişdibi. The last

day lead us on a nature walk from Gökçe to the sea side. In 2005 and 2006, for several reasons, we could not organise special events for this day.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> February, World Wetland Day, we generally participated in events of other organisations.

Our Women Group has organised very nice celebrations for Mother's Day in 2005 and 2006. We want here to thank the Municipality of Akyaka for their support.

#### **6.4 Internet Work**

The website we have used until now ([www.akyaka.org](http://www.akyaka.org)) has changed its appearance caused by adversities in our board and will even look more different further on without losing its quality. The part dealing with our NGO will be updated as usual and became a real source of information by now. We try to deal with questions and suggestions not only from Turkey, but from all over the world. The sites are designed and maintained by our webmaster Thomas Schmitz who keeps you informed about current events and who is sharing important links with you. You find news about every event in time on the website and you are informed about changes via email or on the homepage. Here a special thanks to Thomas Schmitz and his longstanding efforts.

#### **6.5 Issues we protested against (2004- 2006)**

- 6.5.1 In the 80s The sub governor of Ula forbade hunting on the part of the Gökova plain that is a 1.Degree Natural Site. In the year 1988 the whole of the Gökova Basin was declared an APSA, hence on hunting was forbidden all year round. The reed fires being for hunting reasons are tragedies for wildlife as well as a catastrophe for tourism. Of course hunting has decreased quite a lot over the last years, again there are still poachers, mainly from outside and regrettably we are forced to remind the control organs every seasons anew of the restriction. We find this 20 years struggle very tiring. If this basin wants to exist from an alternative or even a birding tourism these laws will have to be implemented.
- 6.5.2 For the same reason we are protesting against the meanwhile fashionable bird and wild boar expelling gas bombs used on the fields. This method is making inhabitants and visitors of Akyaka very uncomfortable; besides, if a nature tourism approach is required, we have no understanding for birds and wildlife being driven away like this.
- 6.5.3 In 2003/04 we demanded the lawful management of the meanwhile privatised Gökova Forest Park according to the Shore Law. We prepared to open a court case, engaged a lawyer and were ready to fight for the free use of the shore line. Meanwhile in 2004 the park changed hands a second time and Hamdi Yücel Gürsoy, who is one of our honourable members, took over the management. Of course we refrained from the court case after hearing of Hamdi Bey's agreeable approaches.
- 6.5.4 We have tried to realise several times the subjects of the strategic contract we signed with the municipality for the treatment of stray animals and protested against the several animal poisonings that happen from time to time. The base for our actions is the new Animal Protection Law.

- 6.5.5 We protested against the partly destruction of the Haşimbahçe Village's mosaic, that has been mentioned in our Guide Book and informed concerned departments.
- 6.5.6 Another case could only be corrected with a 'petition storm'. The beach club/discotheque that opened during the season 2005 had to close down after a short working period, the cobblestone pavement and the trees had to go, since all of these actions went on without any permissions. The noise coming over to Akyaka until the early hours stopped.
- 6.5.7 We informed the State Waterworks about the artesian wells that were running freely and without permission in the plain. The wells have been worrying our farmers because of the loss of water and the potential future saltification problems.
- 6.5.8 We have send a comprehensive petition to the Akyaka Municipality in 2005 about the new destructions of the river bank, the noise pollution by some tour boats and the related devastations of reeds and other nature parts. A petition to us carrying the signatures of 27 inhabitants of Akyaka justified this action.
- 6.5.9 We demanded a tree to be cut that leaned over the entrance road to Akyaka and had a potential to cause danger and wrote to the Forest Management Department.
- 6.5.10 We justifiably complained about a battue organised in winter by the villagers of Gökçe. We sincerely hope that the next time the required permissions will be applied for and that approaches will be according to the law

## **7. GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **7.1 Office Stock Acquirements/ Maintenance**

- 7.1.1 As a contribution of the Bio- Gökova project we could buy a colour laser printer. Now we can design and print coloured posters and brochures ourselves.
- 7.1.2 For plastic and ceramic art exhibitions we had ten pedestals made.
- 7.1.3 Some repairs had to be made to the Art and Culture House. The gate, banisters and finally the stairs themselves had to be renewed. Besides this regular spring cleanings, white wash and other maintenance works have to be done yearly.

### **7.2 State of Memberships and Member Fees**

In the period of 2004- 2006 we registered 33 new ordinary and 3 honourable members. 13 members have quit or had to be unsigned because they did not pay their fees for more than 2 years. We have send notices to members who did not pay until the books had to be closed for the general meeting. The last status gave us 117 paying members from a total of 168, who protected their right to participate and to vote on the general meeting.

### **7.3 Change of Bank Account**

After having been clients of Oyak Bank for many years we changed over to the newly opened branch of Garanti Bank in 2004. We took great care to inform everybody about this

change. We want to repeat the information once again anyway: Gökova- Akyaka'yı Sevenler Derneği , Garanti Bank, Muğla Branch (507), Acc. No. 6299583.

#### **7.4 Inspections**

In the last period our organisation has been inspected and controlled again and again. Every year regular, extraordinary and intern inspections have kept us busy for days on end. In August 2005 a 3 person committee of the Ministry of Inner Affairs even came to inspect us. We think we are the most inspected NGO of the whole province. Of course and expectedly an organisation like ours, well managed, working orderly and rightly came out clean every time. The ugly slanders of people who became uncomfortable by our activities and petitions were unfounded every time. We hope that finally they will refrain from this kind of negative interferences, accept our existence and show due respect to our work.

#### **7.5 The new NGO Law**

The new NGO Law made some of our organisational work easier and increased the self responsibility for each corporation or organisation as most of the EU Accession Laws do. Generally an organisation like ours, which is working correctly, carefully and following developments regularly does not have problems with this. Of course the adaptation of our constitution to the new law is obligatory. These changes will improve the NGO's contemporary and professional work as well.

Our members will have to tell us their citizenship numbers according to the new law. We already found out some of them via the Internet, but there are still some missing. Therefore, please, inform us via post, email or fax or please visit us in the office. Thank you very much.

At this point we want to thank Irene Cantez, who since many years is voluntarily supporting our organisation with her valuable help in a quite and inconspicuous way.

### **8. Other Activities and Interests of our Chairwoman**

Our organisation's chairwoman Bahar Suseven is working at diverse places in our country as expert or consultant, sometimes she works outside of Turkey as well.

Our chairwoman is participating in programs of WWF International/ Across the Waters as an expert. Furthermore she is developing her own capacity in their special education Mediterranean Leadership Program. Besides she is consultant to diverse national organisations, sometimes even to state departments. In January- May 2006 she stayed and worked for four months as Bird Flu Consultant for Doğa Derneği in Ankara.

All of these activities, works or meetings expenses are either met by these organisations or departments or financed by her personally.

The slanderous rumours that our NGO, Gökova- Akyaka'yı Sevenler Derneği is financially supporting her have become subject of inspections and controls. none of the activities of our chairwoman is supported financially in any way by our NGO. We sincerely hope that these ugly and wrong accusations will finally have an end.

In the Name of the NGO Board  
Bahar Suseven