

Project Update: March 2019

As part of this project, we have visited 10 fishery ports from Samandağ/Hatay to Karataş/Adana along the Iskenderun Bay. These ports are the most active ones on the Mediterranean coast of Turkey. During our visit to the fishing ports, we carried out interviews with purse seiners and small-scale fishers based on a structured questionnaire. Additionally, we performed interviews with several recreational fishers. Our questionnaires were to gather information on spatio-temporal distribution of the Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFT) in the research area out of well known breeding season. Preliminary results indicated that fishers encounter BFT individuals during unexpected seasons. For example, a group of fishers in the region reported that they come across BFT off the Turkish-Syrian border around 70 m depth in the winter months. This indicates that BFT may stay in the northeastern Mediterranean for several months before or after spawning.

Fortunately, very few fishers reported catching BFT. Fishers stated that BFT is not target species in the region and cannot be caught as bycatch easily because the catching is restricted by the fishing gear used in the region. This information will be extended to all the Mediterranean coasts of Turkey within the context of this project.





The aim of this project is also to raise awareness of local community for the conservation of BFT. For this purpose, we specially spent a long period of time at fishery ports during our visits and explained project aims before starting interviews with fishers (informative meetings). After we completed the interviews, we also asked fishers what kinds of problems they have. We also created a memorable motto “GoBluefin” and logo that focus on the conservation of Atlantic bluefin tuna under “Large Pelagics Research Group”. The project official e-mail address is gobluefin@gmail.com. Moreover, our social media accounts are available. Twitter and Instagram account links are follows:

Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/gobluefin>

Instagram:

https://instagram.com/gobluefin?utm_source=ig_profile_share&igshid=1syc869w9i6le

