Project Update: January 2019

1. The Field Work Area

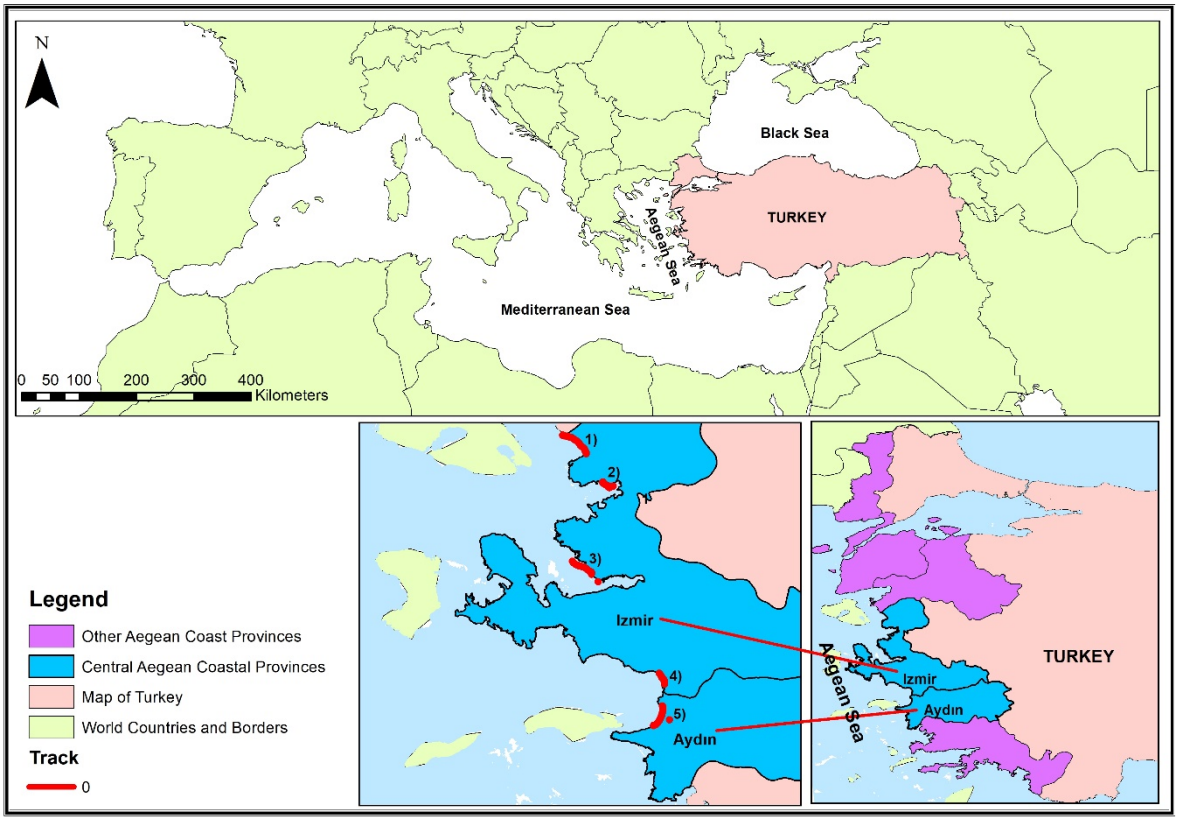

Figure 1. 1) Dikili Coordinates 2) Bakırçay Coordinates 3) Gediz River Coordinates 4) Pamucak Coast Coordinates *5) Davutlar Coast.*

The Turkish Aegean and Mediterranean coasts, which are somewhat less disturbed compared to the western part of the Mediterranean, and oligotrophic, still hold significant biological diversity. In addition, the area is vulnerable because of the predominant indo-pacific originated foreign and invasive species coming to the Mediterranean through the Suez Canal. Yet, to increase the resilience the coastal ecosystems, Turkey's coasts bear a total of 11 Special Environmental Protection Areas declared by the Council of Ministers on these coasts. For this study, we will perform coastal surveys at 5 areas on the central Turkish Aegean coasts comprising long sandy beaches with long stretches are considered for easier access and less costly performance (Figure 1). The Dilek Peninsula and Büyük Menderes Delta National Park located just south of our field site, the Davutlar Coasts, is one of the most important natural areas of Turkey. In addition, the Dilek Peninsula National Park is protected by the Ramsar Convention, the Bern Convention, and the Rio Convention and the Barcelona Convention. Another coastal stretch, the Gediz Delta (Izmir Bird Paradise), has species richness and international importance. Apart from being a Ramsar site, it has been declared as Wildlife Protection Area. The fact that on the specific fieldwork areas, Davutlar coasts and Pamucak coasts receive too many reported stranding cases that make these areas important for the project. Finally, northern limits of the study area (Dikili and Bakırçay) do not have any protection status, yet not much information obtained from these sites made them important as the control sites.

2. Coastline Survey

The Autumn coastline survey was carried out. Contact information was given to the enterprises in the places where the survey area was visited to inform them about a possible stranding case.

The land was scanned on an inflatable boat at a speed of 9-10 knots, about 5 to 30 m from afar the land with a binocular (Figure 2). A necropsy bag was kept for use in the event of a possible stranded individual. Due to the need for a drone license in our country, the drone could not be obtained for the first survey.

Figure 2. a) Gediz, a, b,c) Pamucak Coast

3. Dolphin Sighting

In the autumn survey in Gediz Delta, a group of bottlenose dolphin (Tursiops truncatus) species, consisting of an estimated 6 individuals (one calf), was observed while displaying feeding and traveling behavior (Figure 3). The group was observed 2 m away from the research boat and approximately 15 m from the shore. Simultaneously, another bottlenose dolphin group was observed approximately 7 m northwest of this group.

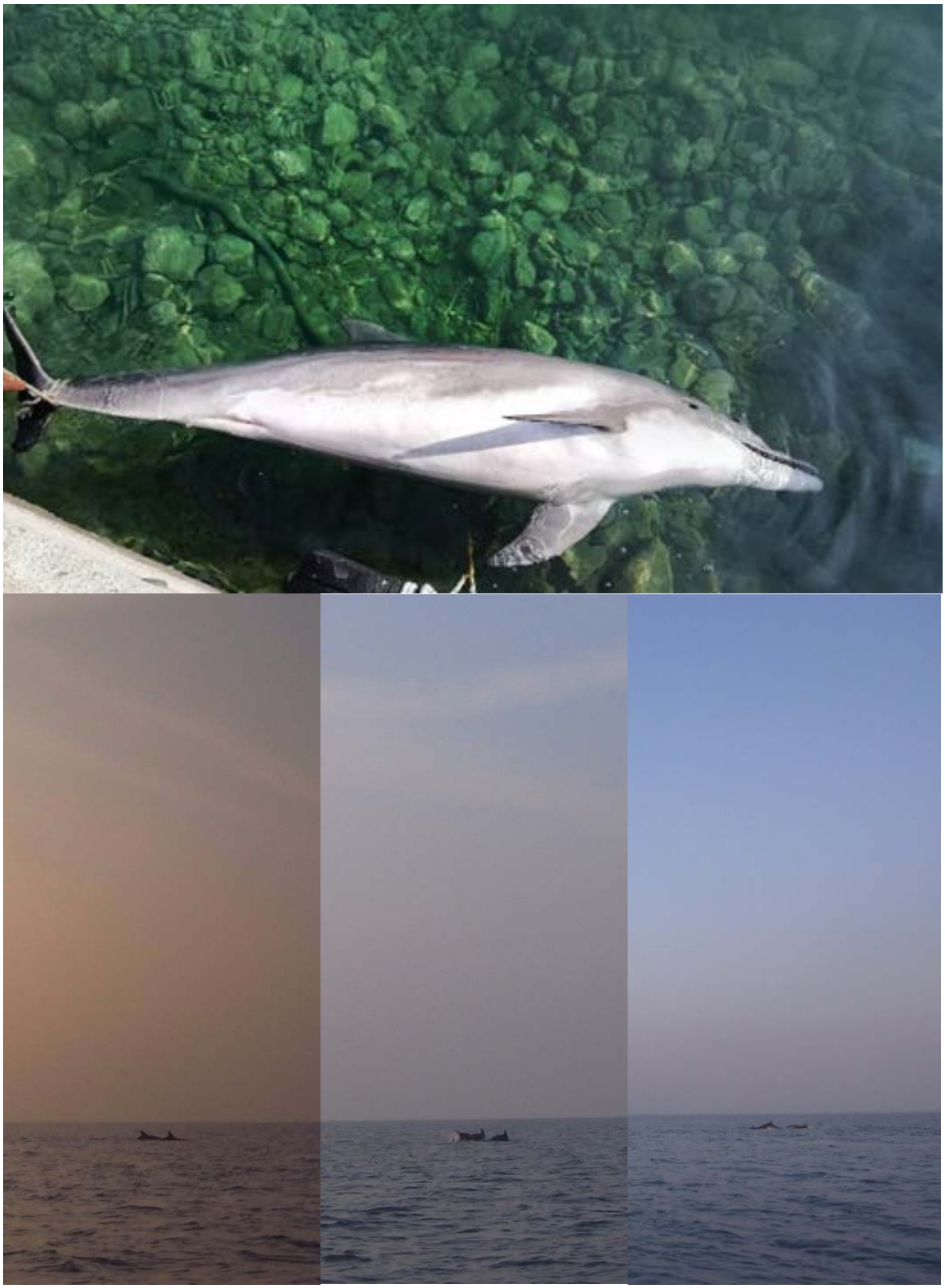

Figure 3. Tursiops truncatus

4. 17.10.2018 - A Stranded Dolphin Report

Tursiops truncatus denunciation call, Karaburun.

With the starting of the project, We have obtained permission from the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, General Directorate of Fisheries and

Aquaculture for the perform of a necropsy to the carcasses in the area, and the collection of organs and tissues.

The stranding event that took place in Karaburun Saipaltı on October 17, 2018, was reported by the veterinarian Erdem Danyer within the scope of the project. Skin, intestine, heart, and liver samples were taken from the dolphin. These samples were sent to the Etlik Veterinary Control Central Research Institute. Necropsy was performed by veterinarian Hazal Elban, Metin Giden, Zeynel Tok. The result of necropsy was given as 'in the organoleptic examination, no parasites and negativities were detected in the internal organs, and it is estimated that there may be domestic, environmental and industrial pollution.'