

Progress Report II

Title of Application: Reviving Oriental (Anatolian) Sweetgum Forest by implementing Action

Plan in Southwestern Turkey

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Project ID: 33742-D

Report Date: 31 May 2021

Place: Koycegiz-TURKEY

We have continued our new term studies for the protection of Oriental (Anatolian) sweetgum forests under pandemic conditions within the scope of Rufford Foundation's financial support.

During the second phase studies, the latest status of afforestation we carried out with the Köyceğiz Forest Management Directorate in previous years, new afforestation issues have been done, the Sweetgum Action Plan has been reviewed and information on what stakeholders have done so far reported, spring period data from bat boxes and photo/camera traps and amphibian-reptile observations were carried out and/or checked.

A cooperation protocol has been prepared with the officials of the General Directorate of Conservation of Natural Assets and the General Directorate of Forestry regarding the conversion of eucalyptus plantations, which are an invasive species, into sweetgum forests, as well as the afforestation of oriental sweetgum in suitable areas and openings in the forest, whose ecological assessments have been made by us.

In order to implement the corridor methodology in the deed lands located in the fragmented forests and / or on the edges of our study area, a comprehensive real estate analysis report is continuing to be prepared in cooperation with our project assistant and local real estate agencies.

In addition, we have started to prepare the articles of IDENTIFYING PRIORITY AREAS OF AN ENDANGERED SWEETGUM TREE SPECIES (*Liquidambar orientalis* MILL.) FOR POTENTIAL PLANTATIONS AS IN-SITU CONSERVATION APPROACH and HISTORICAL AND CURRENT BIOGEOGRAPHY PATTERNS OF ORIENTAL SWEETGUM FORESTS (*Liquidambar orientalis* MILL. - ALTINGIACEAE).

In order to reduce the impact of habitat fragmentation in Anatolian sweetgum forests and to strengthen the connections, we have continued the afforestation works that we have been carrying out in cooperation with the Köyceğiz Forest Management Directorate for many years, although we could not realize this year as a festival-festival due to pandemic constraints.



New afforestation issues have been done during spring 2021.

The study of the survival rate on those and previous afforested places will be done between this summer period.



The bat boxes were checked for wintering and spring activities. Summer activities will be checked during this summer season too.



The photo/camera traps were checked for spring activities.



Herpetofauna researches have been done. Nearly 30 species have been observed during these researches.

In the next 3 months, it is planned to finalize and sign the cooperation protocol, to terminate herpetofauna studies and turn them into 2 scientific publications, to submit the other 2 scientific publications related with the priority areas for the plantation and natural history properties of the oriental sweetgum tree that have been mentioned above, to continue the preparing of a comprehensive real estate analysis report, to continue bat boxes and photo/camera-trap controls and new bat boxes to be placed on the field. Moreover, the study of the survival rate on the previous afforested places will be done during summer season.