



Hepyerinden.koop, an FAO-supported digital marketing network comprising 10 women's cooperatives from across Türkiye, attracted great interest at the 5th Türkiye Cooperatives Fair.

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Ebubekir Gizligider, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, writes for FAOTURN

From the Country Representative

The year 2023 was marked by numerous challenges. On 6 February, two major earthquakes struck southeast Türkiye in quick succession, causing severe damage lives of people as well as to the supply chains of a region vital to the agriculture and food sector. The impacts of this disaster compounded existing challenges as the country endeavoured to build back in a post-COVID-19 environment.

In response, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) mobilized all existing resources and capacity to support recovery efforts in the region, working in close cooperation with relevant institutions to ensure that all efforts build on sustainable and resilient practices designed to contribute to the continuation of agricultural production and ensure food security.



Viorel Gutu , Subregional Coordinator for Central Asia, FAO Representative in Türkiye.

The agrifood system is also facing increased pressure from climate change. To counter the impacts of climate extremes, in 2023 FAO-Türkiye launched through seven new initiatives which intensified existing efforts.

This 16th edition of FAOTURN presents a summary of all work undertaken in 2023 including several vital new projects launched by the Country Office. It also provides information on FAO-Türkiye's partnership programmes with academia, the private sector and civil society organizations that contribute directly to efforts to achieve SDG 17, namely "Partnerships for the Goals".

A highpoint of 2023 was the United Nation's 16 Days of Activism, a campaign dedicated to empowering women, which proved particularly vibrant and diverse this year. However, despite progress made, it is important to acknowledge the need for continued efforts across all sectors.

Finally, this issue of FAOTURN features a guest contribution from Ebubekir Gizligider, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Forestry.

Happy reading

In the spotlight

Building stronger partnerships to achieve common goals

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is convinced that hunger and malnutrition can be eradicated in our lifetime. However, meeting the challenge of achieving Zero Hunger requires political commitment and major alliances with key stakeholders. Such partnerships are at the heart of FAO's mission to help build consensus for a world without hunger. The effectiveness and credibility of the Organization as a policymaking forum and a unique multilingual centre of excellence, knowledge and technical expertise depends to a considerable degree on its ability to work and develop strategic partnerships. Only through effective collaboration with governments, civil society, private sector, academia, research centres and cooperatives, and making use of each other's knowledge and comparative advantages, can food insecurity be overcome. FAO therefore established a team to achieve this goal by expanding partnerships to advocate for multi-stakeholder collaboration, in order to achieve FAO's strategic Four Betters and the SDGs.

As part of these efforts, the FAO Country Office signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with Ankara University and Bahçeşehir University, with whom it co-organized events for World Food Day. Another World Food Day event was co-organized with the Federation of Food and Drink Industry Associations of Türkiye (TGDF), an umbrella organization representing food and drink industries in the country, with whom FAO also signed an MoU.

New contacts and exploratory talks have been initiated with various actors to enhance private sector engagement. Discussions on elaborating and formalizing partnerships are ongoing with the Turkish Industry and Business Association (TUSIAD), the largest business representative body in Türkiye, and two national banks, İşbankası and Şekerbank, in support of FAO-Türkiye's cooperative programme and efforts to promote smallholder empowerment.

Contact has also been initiated with the universities of Yaşar and Ozyegin Universities to formalize partnerships through a letter of intent and MOU, respectively. In addition, formal engagement negotiations have been initiated with the Izmir Commodity Exchange, a multistakeholder platform, in line with FAO's partnership strategies and efforts to transform agrifood systems towards greater sustainability.

In October 2023, FAO signed an implementation agreement with Pınar Süt, a private corporation, to address the challenges of youth migration and aging farming communities in Turkish agriculture. The aim of the partnership is to engage with young farmers, promote sustainable agriculture and tackle rural development issues. The collaboration involved a field survey by Ankara University's Development Studies Centre (AKÇAM) to understand young farmers' motivations and needs followed by a multistakeholder workshop to formulate an action plan to support rural youth and enhance production. The goal was to encourage young farmers to stay in rural areas and to foster socioeconomic growth and investments. A workshop was held to announce the survey findings in Izmir in December 2023.

Informal engagements have been pursued through partnerships with Migros and Metro AG. FAO and Migros have jointly drafted a consumer guide on healthy food consumption and food literacy, due to be published shortly. With Metro AG, FAO has implemented a campaign to support the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA), with a particular focus on providing assistance to small-scale aquaculture farmers in Muğla, and promoting trout farming and consumption in line with the IYAFA objectives.

FAO Rome private sector partnerships unit visits Türkiye

Private sector representatives with whom the FAO-Türkiye office collaborates came together in Ankara at a meeting with the participation of Giulio Cataldi from the FAO Rome Private Sector Partnerships Unit and Darya Alekseeva, Partnerships Officer of the Central Asia Regional Office. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (TÜSİAD), the Pınar Institute, Metro AG Türkiye, Migros Türkiye, Türkiye İş Bankası, Türkiye İş Bankası/İmecemobil and Şekerbank, and FAO officials. The participants evaluated cooperation opportunities in the fields of agriculture, food and sustainability, and shared their opinions and knowledge from their respective fields of experience.



The FAO-Türkiye office organized a partnership programme meeting with representatives of business associations, markets and banks

Women's Power

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment

On 10 April 2023, FAO-Türkiye staff participated in Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and Sexual Harassment (SH) training. SEA is a form of violence and constitutes an abuse of power by humanitarian aid workers and other actors engaged in assisting against their affected population.

PSEA visibility and awareness-raising materials were also printed and disseminated to implementing partners.

Gender sensitive language training for FAO-Türkiye staff

On 25 October 2023, 20 FAO staff attended Gender Sensitive Language Training. The female and male participants demonstrated equal levels of interest in the

topics covered during the training. The training provided a solid understanding of gender-related concepts and promoting gender equality. Feedback from participants highlighted the necessity for further training to better understand gender equality, a need for more data for males, as well as comparisons between women and men, and recommended opening up discussions to achieve further engagement.

Overall, 85.7 percent of participants rated the training as very good, and 14.3 percent of participants considered rated it as good. Overall, 71.4 percent of participants deemed the level of content appropriate for their professional background.

16 Days of Activism

In 2023, the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence Campaign, which kicked off on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and ran until 10 December, Human Rights Day, called for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls.

Under the theme "UNiTE! Invest To Prevent Violence against Women & Girls", the campaign called for the financing of prevention strategies and the transformation of social norms to end violence against women and girls, employing the hashtag and slogan #NoExcuse.

During the 16 Days of Activism campaign, UNCT members and Viorel Gutu, Sub-Regional Coordinator for Central Asia and FAO Representative in Türkiye, shared quotes on social media channels explaining that migration and displacement triggered by climate change often disproportionately affects women and children, particularly in rural areas. "This leads to increased risks of violence against women, exploitation and social disruption", as Gutu noted, arguing that "at this point, there is no excuse for violence against women."



The UN Türkiye team joined forces to participate in the 16 Days of Activism.

Harvest time

As we leave behind 2023...

The year 2023 was a challenging one for Türkiye. While recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, the country suffered two major earthquakes which struck Türkiye's Fertile Crescent, a region that produces 20 percent of the country's agriculture, resulting in over 50 000 deaths and leaving more than 100 000 people homeless. This disaster resulted in the collapse of irrigation canals, warehouses and barns, leading to the death of thousands of animals, a severe blow for the agriculture and food sector.

The FAO-Türkiye Office reacted swiftly, working to support earthquake victims by meeting urgent humanitarian needs and then working to help restore the food and agriculture system.

Additionally, 2023 was a year in which the impacts of the global climate crisis became more increasingly evident, with extreme climate events, such as droughts and temperature records, placing food security at risk. In response, the FAO-Türkiye Office intensified its efforts to address these issues. Throughout the year, FAO-Türkiye also carried out dozens of projects in the field, as detailed below.

Seven new GEF projects launched

The year 2023 was a visible and productive one for the Global Environment Facility (GEF) programme, with seven new projects covering the GEF 7 period launched with the strong participation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MoAF).

Additionally, launch events were organized for the Kaz Mountains project, Gediz project and Bolu projects. A flamingo ringing activity organized as part of the Gediz Project was well received by the young participants, and the first phase of the Farmer Field Schools project, organized within the scope of the Land Degradation Neutrality Upper Sakarya Basin project, was completed with the participation of 97 farmers, leading to the start of the second phase.

FAO-Türkiye Partnership Programmes continue to expand

The year also saw an increase in the visibility of the FAO Türkiye Partnership Programmes (FTPP) in international fora. A regional workshop dedicated to the FTTP took place on 24 January in Baku, to discuss the results and successes



GEF 7 launch event organized in cooperation with MoAF.

of recent projects, and the 2023 International Conference on Food Security (ICFS 2023), held in Samarkand on 7–8 September, provided an opportunity to showcase some of the accomplishments achieved under the FTTP through the organization of two exhibitions.

Digital Farmer Field Schools are transforming agriculture

The Digital Farmer Field School (FFS), initiated by FAO-Türkiye with funding from the European Union and in collaboration with the Tekirdağ Leader Farmers Association, is transforming the landscape of digital agriculture in Türkiye. The initiative's platform uygulamalificitciokulu.org offers farmers access to practical and interactive educational resources, along with integrated field monitoring systems. These systems are designed to improve crop management efficiency and encourage the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices, representing a significant step forward in the sector.

FAO-Türkiye is dedicated to providing farmers with modern agricultural techniques that increase productivity and ease the transition to sustainable farming. The digital platform plays a key role in preparing farmers for the agricultural challenges of the future. In support of this initiative, comprehensive field visits have been conducted in ten provinces. These visits are critical for acquainting farmers with the platform's features, ensuring they can effectively utilize these digital tools to advance their farming practices.



The digital platform uygulamalificitciokulu.org offers farmers access to practical and interactive educational resources.

Healing the wounds of the earthquake together

The earthquakes on 6 February significantly impacted 11 provinces in Türkiye, vital for crops, horticulture, forestry, fisheries, livestock, and dairy production. The affected region, a part of the Fertile Crescent, is instrumental to Türkiye's agricultural GDP, contributing a diverse range of crops and playing a crucial role in the food processing industry. Initial assessments have shown extensive damage to agricultural infrastructure, significant loss of livestock shelters and animals, and disruptions to supply chains. In response, FAO has been working closely with MoAF and other partners to assess and respond to the needs of the agricultural sector.

The Earthquake Response and Recovery Plan (ERRP) is valued at USD 112 million and aims at supporting around 700 000 people in the affected areas. The ERRP focuses on restoring agrifood systems, revitalizing agricultural labour markets and empowering rural communities. To aid this effort, FAO has allocated about USD 265 500 in agricultural inputs to 2 725 beneficiaries and is set to provide USD 465 000 in unconditional cash support to 1 843 farmer households. Additionally, the Technical Cooperation Project (TCP) for Emergencies is extending further assistance, supplying dairy equipment and greenhouse inputs to 455 beneficiaries, along with cash assistance to 430 fishery households.

These initiatives align with comprehensive strategies recommended in the Agriculture Sector Needs Assessment for Earthquake-Impacted Provinces, highlighting the necessity of support in the form of inputs, reconstruction, and inclusive recovery for a sustainable agricultural sector. In addition to these interventions, the sustainable recovery of 885 smallholders is supported through the enhancement of technical skills, encompassing climate-smart agriculture and best practices in agriculture, facilitated through Farmer Field Schools.



The ERRP provides assistance to victims of the February earthquakes in Türkiye.

Women-led cooperatives networked through Hepyerinden.koop

In collaboration with MoAF and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, FAO-Türkiye, launched “HepYerinden.coop”, an innovative e-commerce platform aimed at empowering women-led cooperatives. This initiative, financed by a European Union project, represents a significant step in integrating digitalization into agriculture and fostering sustainable practices. HepYerinden acts as a digital hub for these cooperatives, providing a space for collaboration and a unified identity, essential for both economic and social progress.

The platform's significance was highlighted during the launch ceremony, with representatives from various organizations and international voices emphasizing its role in rural development, employment, and confronting challenges such as natural disasters. Renowned actor Engin Altan Düzyatan supported the initiative by becoming the platform's first post-launch customer.

Stories of resilience from cooperatives that overcame impacts of the February earthquakes have demonstrated the transformative potential of HepYerinden. The platform is not just a marketplace; it functions as a symbol of collective strength and a tool for sustainable development in Türkiye's agricultural sector.



HepYerinden acts as a digital hub for cooperatives, providing a space for collaboration and a unified identity.

Labour market assessment of the Promoting Resilience through Improved Livelihoods project

A labour market impact assessment of the EU-funded “Promoting Resilience through Improved Livelihoods” project, conducted by an independent research team, found the project achieved its targets related to employment, skill development and enhancing resilience. The findings of the study were compiled in the report The Impact of the Project on Beneficiaries' Livelihoods and the Local Labour Market. The report emphasized the

substantial involvement of women in the project, often equalling or exceeding the number of male participants in some areas. This finding underscores the project's role in promoting gender equality and empowering women in the workforce.

Data from the report clearly illustrate the project's profound impact on local labour dynamics and the effectiveness of focused efforts to enhance economic and social welfare in the communities it serves. Additionally, the report noted a marked improvement in vocational skills among beneficiaries, particularly in the agricultural sector, signalling a shift towards more sustainable and resilient livelihoods. Overall, the findings demonstrate that the project helped to empower communities and promote agriculture as a viable and fulfilling occupation.



The study's findings indicated that the project achieved its targets.

Programmes in action

FRIENDS Konya and Antalya missions

Within the scope of the "Forest Restoration Improvement for Environmental Development and Sustainability in Central Asia" (FRIENDS) project implemented under the FAO-Türkiye Forestry Partnership Programme (FTFP), experts from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan participated in a study tour organized to learn about good practices implemented in Konya and Antalya to present Türkiye's experience and expertise in combating land degradation and forest restoration in countries in the sub-region.

FISHCap concludes with closing event

The project "Capacity Development for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Management in Central Asia, Azerbaijan and Türkiye (Phase I: Aquaculture and food safety)", FISHCap, will end with a closing event to be held in Izmir on 18 January 2024. The FISHCAP project, which has a budget of USD 1 million, has increased capacities

in countries of the sub-region to effectively address the sustainable exploitation, management, protection and development of freshwater resources for sustainable fish production in support of food safety.

Regional workshop in Ordu underlines the importance of gender dynamics in agriculture for achieving the SDGs

As part of the project "Leaving no one behind: Greater involvement and empowerment of rural women in Türkiye and Central Asia", a two-day regional workshop, held in Ordu on 13–14 December 2023, brought together participants from ministries and government institutions of Tajikistan, Türkiye and Uzbekistan. Within the scope of the workshop, government officials working in agriculture, forestry and food security shared experiences from their organizations related to socially inclusive and gender responsive policies and practices that address the needs of rural women at a risk of being left behind. The workshop also included visits to gender units created by MoAF and meetings with rural women benefiting from the programme.



Workshop participants in Ordu from Tajikistan, Türkiye and Uzbekistan.

Support to diversification and sustainable crop production intensification for smallholder farmers in the drylands of Borno State

An innovative project launched by FAO-Türkiye's Partnership Programme on Food and Agriculture (FTPP II) in Borno State, on 6 November, is set to transform agriculture in the arid regions of Nigeria. The project entitled "Support to the diversification and sustainable crop production intensification for smallholder farmers in the drylands of Borno State" aims to build the capacity of farmers and agriculturalists to diversify cropping systems and to promote sustainable crop management techniques for drylands.

This collaborative project, involving Nigeria, FAO-Türkiye and the ministries of agriculture of both countries, with the support of the Plant Production and Protection Division of FAO (NSP), will run until July 2025 with a budget of USD 200 000.

The project inception meeting was held online on 6 November 2023, and was attended by high-level officials and relevant experts from Nigeria and Türkiye.



FAO-Türkiye partnership expands to Nigeria's Borno state with crop diversification project for drylands.

Land degradation neutrality upper sakarya basin project

Within the scope of the Land Degradation Neutrality Upper Sakarya project, a Farmer Field Schools Curriculum Workshop was held in Ankara on 13–14 December. During the workshop, experts contributed to discussions on the topics of training to be delivered to farmers. In 2022, four Farmer Field Schools were established and implemented in conjunction with the Ankara, Kütahya and Eskişehir provincial directorates. These four schools focused on irrigation, animal husbandry and greenhouse cultivation, reaching 97 farmers, 47 of whom were women. In the upcoming period, farmers attending the four schools will receive training in greenhouse farming, including pasture farming, contracted fodder pea production and cut flower production.



FFS Curriculum Workshop held in Ankara.

Planting for agroecological practices in Bolu

Agroecology, a sustainable, environmentally friendly and ecosystem-focused agricultural approach, aims to be practical and also to share its economic benefits with farmers, increase awareness and establish demonstration areas for more sustainable agriculture through a participatory approach.

As part of the project “Enhancement of Agro-Ecological Management Systems through Promoting Ecosystem-Oriented Food Production”, practical agro-ecological training sessions were provided to district farmers in the Seben and Yeniçağa districts of Bolu, including detailed explanations on how and when to collect soil samples. The training was attended by over 50 participants including technical personnel, representatives of NGOs and farmers. Following the theoretical sessions, soil samples were collected with farmers from 17 different locations districts to create pilot demonstrations for agro-ecological practices.



Over 50 participants received training including technical personnel, representatives of NGOs and farmers.

Following the collection of soil samples, the sowing of seeds commenced in the districts of Yeniçağa and Seben districts, where demonstrations were set up at nine and eight different points, respectively, covering a total area of 10 hectares. The demonstration plots took into consideration climatic conditions, sustainable land management (SLM) and Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) practices.

Transforming Women event held in Ankara

The Transforming Women Platform works to address the needs of vulnerable groups at greatest risk of being left behind and draws attention to the importance of taking steps for a sustainable world. On 11 December 2023, the platform hosted the “Transforming Women” event in collaboration with the TOBB Women Entrepreneurs

Board in Ankara. A panel was organized with Ayşegül Selşik, Mert Fırat, Elvan Odabaşı, TOBB Ankara Women Entrepreneurs Board President Hande Öztürk, and DG Doğru Reconsideration Founder Nagihan Yılmaz. During the panel, Ayşegül Selşik touched upon FAO's approach to food loss and waste, cooperatives and the importance of women in agriculture and food systems.

Unlocking the potential of figs in Türkiye

Türkiye recently launched the One Country One Priority Product (OCOP) initiative in cooperation with FAO, designating figs as a special agricultural product. The national launch event, held on 7–8 December 2023 in Aydın, Türkiye, featured the participation of various stakeholders, including government officials, members of academia and industry representatives. Keynote presentations outlined the global progress of OCOP, with a focus on fig development in Türkiye. The event emphasized strategic collaboration to strengthen the fig sector and included practical discussions on exporting processed fig products. The success of the launch signifies a transformative step in Türkiye's commitment to sustainable agrifood systems. Participants also visited the Fig Research Institute and fig-drying facilities, gaining insights into industry best practices. OCOP aims to promote inclusive and sustainable food systems by developing Special Agricultural Products and addressing gaps in the value chain.



Participants visiting fig storage and processing facilities of Tariş Cooperative.

Observations from FAO partners

FAO-Türkiye Collaboration: Improving Sustainable Food Security, Resilience and Global Cooperation

Climate change, natural disasters and ongoing conflicts in various parts of the world have all demonstrated the importance of safe and accessible food for human health. Unfortunately, a significant portion of the world's population still face food insecurity and malnutrition.



Ebubekir Gizligider, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Türkiye appreciates FAO's contributions to achieving sustainable food security and ensuring a rapid response to agricultural threats and emergencies worldwide.

The FAO-Türkiye collaboration is a good example of international cooperation working to address these global challenges. For more than seven decades, FAO and Türkiye have cooperated closely across almost all areas of agriculture, food security, fisheries, climate change, forestry and rural development. In recent decades, this cooperation has deepened, resulting in a variety of projects and programmes implemented at both the local and regional level.

Through the government-funded FAO-Türkiye Partnership Programmes, Türkiye has shared its technical knowledge and know-how in the domain of agriculture with a range of countries located in Central Asia, Africa, the Caucasus and the Balkans.

Key components of this collaboration include successful Global Environment Facility (GEF) projects, which have played a pivotal role in fostering biodiversity conservation, climate resilience and sustainable natural resource management, reflecting the shared vision of FAO and Türkiye for creating a harmonious balance between agricultural progress and environmental stewardship.

Joint Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) projects have also played a crucial role, helping agrifood supply chains to recover from damage in the areas most affected by the devastating earthquakes of 6 February 2023. By facilitating targeted assistance, these joint TCP projects have addressed urgent needs and challenges, developing a three-year FAO Earthquake Response and Recovery Plan (ERRP) to assess the needs of agrifood value chains, provide valuable data for planned actions and support the restoration of agrifood systems.

Looking ahead, Türkiye will continue working to enhance this close collaboration with FAO across a broader range

of areas in line with the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, to ensure “better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life”.

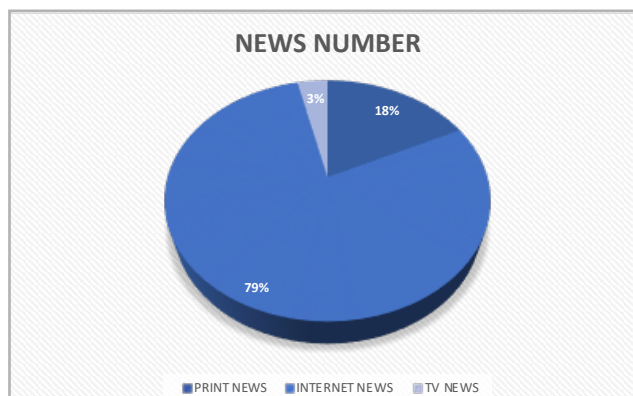
Media and publications

FAO in Türkiye, a new flagship study by the FAO-Türkiye Office has been published

The study FAO in Türkiye presents an overview of FAO activities and initiatives in the country, as well as comprehensive information about programmes and projects executed in the region in partnership with the Republic of Türkiye. The study shows how Türkiye, the world’s seventh largest agricultural economy, through its partnership with FAO and as a member country of the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, plays a pivotal role in implementing not only domestic projects, but also projects whose scope covers the entire Central Asian region.

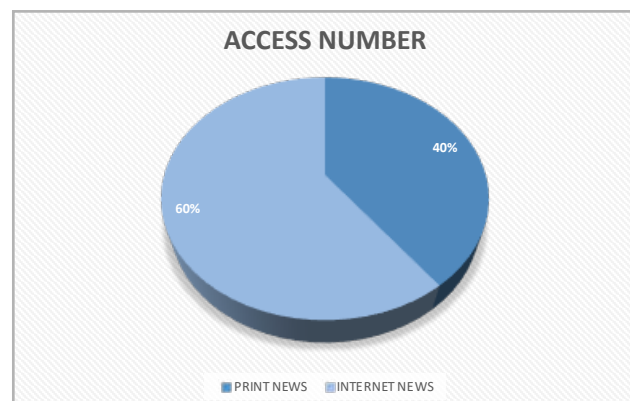
NEWS NUMBERS (January)

NEWS TYPE	NEWS NUMBER
PRINT NEWS	1 251
INTERNET NEWS	5 546
TV NEWS	254



ACCESS NUMBERS (January)

NEWS TYPE	ACCESS NUMBER
PRINT NEWS	41 513 559
INTERNET NEWS	62 911 950



Key facts



Flamingos hold significant importance for the ecosystem. As part of the project “Sustainable and Integrated Water Resource Management in the Gediz River Basin in Türkiye”, a banding operation was carried out for 262 juvenile flamingos located on the artificial breeding island

in the Izmir Bird Sanctuary, situated in the Gediz Delta. The purpose of the banding operation was to track the migration routes, habitats, and lifespans of the flamingos, and also to preserve the wetland ecosystem.

ONE SHOT: Photo of the month



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