

## UNDP's Transformational Role in Turkey's Climate Change Agenda



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Looking back more than two decades, when we, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Turkey enabled the landmark Brundtland Report (Our Common Future) to be published in Turkish and be available to the Turkish public, Turkey has come a long way in embracing the challenges of climate change. At the time, only a handful of Turkish politicians and experts were raising their voices in favour of combating climate change and seeing it as a threat to development. Alongside the Brundtland Report, Turkey's participation, facilitated by UNDP, in the UN Summits in Rio and Johannesburg helped to motivate the government, academia, civil society and private sector to realise the urgency of combating climate change. Despite this motivation, for almost a decade, discussions on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) found more place in the national agenda compared to the climate change issue itself. UNDP played a catalyst role in putting climate change at the heart of the environment and development agenda of the country. Today, Turkey is a party to the UNFCCC and to the Kyoto Protocol and has approved a climate change strategy for which an action plan is being endorsed. An adaptation strategy is being approved and a by-law to regularise and facilitate carbon trading was approved earlier this year. Local communities are adopting practices to protect their livelihoods to enhance their adaptive capacity against climate change impacts. There is a Climate Change Coordination Council leading the national agenda, and a Climate Change Department in the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. UNDP's role in this has been that of a catalyst, broker and provider of expertise. Our contributions have strengthened the understanding of the intrinsic linkages between climate change, growth and sustainable development. With UNDP's support, the decision-making platforms are now participatory and consultative, with increasing number of political initiatives and, most importantly, the integration of climate change in cross-sectoral national development policies.

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## Turkey

### Facts and Figures

- Population: 72,561,312 (2009 census)
- Population Growth Rate: 1.2%
- Young population under 22 age: Approx. 30 million
- GNI Per Capita: 13,359 (2008 PPP \$)
- GDP Growth Rate (2010 Q1): 11.7% (Second fastest growing country after China among G20 countries.)
- International organisations: Member of OECD, NATO and COE. EU candidate country
- Human Development Index (HDI) 2010 value: 0.679 (83rd)
- Inequality Adjusted HDI (IHDI) 2010 value: 0.518 (23% loss)
- Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) 2010 value: 0.039 (With Brazil, highest among High Human Development category, after Peru and Colombia)
- Gender Inequality Index (GII) 2010 value: 0.621 (77th)
- GHG emissions per capita (2007): 5.3 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (EU27: 10.2 tons, OECD average: 15 tons)
- Land distribution: 35% agriculture land, 27% forests, 18% pastures and meadows, other uses 20%
- Biodiversity richness: Around 9,600 plant species, home for at least 8,650 vascular plants species, 30.9% of which are endemic to Turkey. 120 species of mammals, more than 400 birds and around 400 fish, 192 of which are freshwater. Reptile species account for around 130.
- Wetlands: 58 out of a total of 200 wetlands are classified as having "international importance".



Since the mid-80s, when environmental and climate change policies started appearing on Turkey's agenda, UNDP has provided support and technical assistance to the Turkish Government through projects and programmes related to Turkey's international environmental responsibilities.

The Brundtland Report published in 1987 brought environmental issues that the Earth faces, including climate change as stated in the report's "Common Challenges" section, onto the global agenda and for the first time drew international attention to sustainable development.

One of the first significant contributions UNDP made to Turkey's climate change agenda was to enable the publishing of the Brundtland Report, "Our Common Future" in Turkish, and make it available to the Turkish public. Supporting the translation meant supporting the foundation for Turkey's public institutions to perceive global environmental problems multi-dimensionally. In 1989, public institutions and societal organizations came together with the Prime Ministry's State Planning Organisation and the report "Our Common Future" was opened for discussion, thus marking a noteworthy start to applying modern and informed norms in assessing environmental policies in Turkey from a global viewpoint. Shortly after, Turkey's national stance regarding the report was submitted to the UN Secretariat. This process required the Turkish Government to internally and collectively debate and articulate its position on sustainable development.

The shaping of environmental and sustainable development policies in Turkey increasingly drew Turkish society's attention as NGOs increased their awareness and advocacy work, thus leading to positive moves towards taking environmental policies into account in national development strategies, legislation, institutionalization and international relations.

"Our Common Future" inspired and informed the preparation and content of Turkey's Sixth National Development Plan (1990-1994). The Plan was a breakthrough for environmental issues in Turkey and the beginning for including environmental policies and strategies in the country's overall agenda. The plan also included the UN's Rio Process and has since

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shaped the link between economic growth and protecting the environment in Turkey. One significant institutional milestone was the establishment of a National Climate Coordination Group in 1991 under the Ministry of Environment with the coordination of the Prime Ministry's State Meteorological Services, integrating energy, environment and research.

UNDP supported the preparation and effective participation of Turkey to the 1992 UN Environment and Development Conference (Rio Summit), with more than 20 representatives from government and civil society. One of the most important developments of the Summit, which gathered the world together to discuss environmental and development issues for the first time, was that it brought the UNFCCC onto the global agenda. After the convention went into effect in 1994, the UN, UN-affiliated organisations, and many international institutions started identifying personalized strategies and policies to combat climate change and accelerating their country-level work. In the case

of Turkey, this was very much concentrated in UNDP, which started strengthening its capacity in providing technical assistance on environment and sustainable development.



Compared to other OECD and UNFCCC Annex I countries, Turkey's ongoing industrialization process, the lower cumulative and per capita GHG emissions, and low primary energy consumption per capita were the primary factors rendering Turkey a special status country. Despite these special circumstances, Turkey was listed under Annex I and Annex II of the UNFCCC. Turkey did not sign the Convention in 1994, and started an international effort for the recognition of her special circumstances.

Even though Turkey was not a party to UNFCCC, she did benefit from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), which was established at the Rio Summit to ensure the implementation of the UNFCCC. Because climate change was selected as a working

area for determining how GEF resources would be allocated, initially GEF resources were distributed only for biodiversity projects and Turkey received financial support in the fields of biodiversity and ecosystem conservation. GEF Small Grants Programme hosted by UNDP mobilized the NGO community at national and local level. These NGOs became a lobbying potential and helped raise the voice of local communities to take active part in environmental policy decision-making processes.

While Turkey was preparing its Seventh National Development Plan (1996-2000) she was also advocating her special circumstances in international climate dialogues on the other. In preparing the Seventh Plan, UNDP provided support to the sectoral working groups, with particular emphasis on mainstreaming environment, gender and technical cooperation. This strengthened the partnership with UNDP in Turkey, and the government was now actively seeking UNDP's technical assistance on environmental issues.

UNDP played an even greater role, providing technical support for the preparation of Turkey's Eighth National Development Plan (2001-2005). During the plan's preparation phase, a Climate Change Specialisation Commission was established to account for climate change gradually becoming a factor in international trade, technology and the movement of capital. The commission was the first participatory platform, where public institutions, academia, vocational institutions and NGOs working in the field of climate change, were included in the drafting of a development plan for Turkey.

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One of the principles of the Eighth Plan stated that: *"In the context of protecting the global climate system, works for joining the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change process in line with the common but differentiated responsibilities principle will be continued in the context of our country's responsibilities, taking into account the needs of the increasing population."* Among her forestry sector targets, Turkey's Eighth Plan also stated that activities contributing to the improvement of the global carbon balance would be initiated.

These national and international efforts resulted in the acceptance of Turkey's special circumstances, and Turkey was removed from Annex II list of UNFCCC at the 7th Conference of Contracting Parties in Marrakech in 2001, which opened the door for official ratification of the Convention by the Turkish Grand National Assembly.

UNDP's role became more visible in fulfilling Turkey's global responsibilities for combating climate change in this period. Turkey prepared for the 2002 UN Sustainable Development World Summit in Johannesburg with financial and technical support from UNDP resulting in an active participation of Turkey in Rio and – more importantly – an effective follow up in that it served as an important milestone in establishing a link between national development policies and climate change at national level. Turkey submitted a National Report on Sustainable Development to the summit and by reviewing national priorities and the international agenda, the report identified six themes, one of which was "Climate Change and Sustainable Development". The chapter evaluated sector approaches, policy tools and measures for reducing greenhouse gas emissions with a particular focus on Turkey's national circumstances.

UNDP coordinated the preparation of the National Report with the participation of a wide range of NGOs and expert institutions alongside official institutions. The initiative's



success, which constituted one of the first broad participatory consultations at the national level, was an important milestone for the development, recognition and participation of NGOs as well as for the implementation of sustainable development policies in Turkey.

This period, in which climate change had a strong reflection in Turkey's national agenda, resulted in the ratification of the UNFCCC by the Turkish General National Assembly in 2004. Five years later, in August 2009, Turkey also became a party to the Kyoto Protocol.

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Even though it is listed as an Annex I country for the UNFCCC convention and should be obligated to the full responsibilities of the protocol, Turkey is included as an Annex B country because it did not join the protocol when it first opened. Therefore, Turkey does not have any officially quantified greenhouse gas emissions restrictions or reductions for the protocol's first liability period (2008-2012).

Based on past involvement, expertise and global network, UNDP became a close ally of Turkey in its fight against climate change within the framework of responsibilities given under the UNFCCC's article on Commitments, where Turkey has undertaken two such responsibilities. One, "Developing a national inventory of all human induced greenhouse gas emissions and emissions eliminated by sinks, using comparative methods approved by the Conference of the Parties; updating and publishing of the inventory at certain periods and making it available for submission to the Conference of the Parties". Two, "Establishing national and regional programmes that include measures for reducing climate change and establishing, implementing, publishing and regularly updating measures that will facilitate climate change adaptation".

As a party to the UNFCCC, Turkey was now required to draft a national communication to outline its situation, identify strategies for combating climate change, and prepare the necessary policies, plans and programmes. UNDP was invited by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry to take on the coordination of Turkey's First National Communication on Climate Change to the UNFCCC, which was completed in August 2007. The preparation was a huge participatory success with contributions from more than 20 institutions and 100 experts and academics in fields such as climate, energy, industry, ecology, forestry, agriculture, economy, waste and governance. Turkey drew a road map with her First National Communication, which still serves as an essential guide for decision-makers and relates to what economic projects to focus on in respective sector, what criteria to use and the technological developments required.





While the First National Communication was being drafted, issues related to combating climate change were elaborated in detail in a report prepared by the State Planning Organisation Specialisation Commission in preparation for the Ninth National Development Plan (2007-2013). The report highlighted the need for a national action plan that includes the energy, transportation, agriculture, forestry, housing, industry, trade and waste sectors in a way that would not prevent Turkey's development efforts while meeting the responsibilities of the UNFCCC. It also stated that attention needed to be given to integrating climate change policies into all sector planning and addressed issues of establishing a national greenhouse gas emissions inventory system, implementing voluntary carbon trade, increasing the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency, supporting clean production, and protecting and improving carbon storage sinks.

The socio-economic development targets set in the Ninth National Development Plan created a platform for wider UNDP-Turkish Government cooperation.

In partnership with EU, UNDP worked together with State Planning Organization to integrate sustainable development principles into sector policies, in which climate change was identified as a cross-cutting issue. The pilot projects on science and technology, energy, forestry, fisheries and urbanization sectors addressed climate change and drew attention to the political, corporate, economic, managerial and social structural changes needed to strengthen Turkey's sustainable development capacity and responding to requirements of the EU accession process.

As a part of the 2010 programme of the Ninth Plan, UNDP worked with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry on drafting Turkey's National Climate Change Action Plan. This action plan also fills the gaps existing in the National Climate Change Strategy of Turkey.

UNDP has accelerated Turkey's participation into global voluntary carbon markets, by bringing together stakeholders to discuss how Turkey will position herself in the post-2012 climate regime. The expert support and capacity development has been effective in drafting the

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Registration Procedures for Projects that Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions that will structure the Ministry of Environment and Forestry's national carbon registration system. The new system will aim to reduce and limit greenhouse gas emissions, increase carbon storage sinks, prevent double counting and ensure transparency and integrity in the market.

UNDP mobilizes the competencies and technical expertise of other UN Agencies, e.g. inter alia UNIDO, FAO, UNEP and WHO. UNDP and UNIDO cooperate with the Turkish Government and mobilize the private sector to promote energy efficiency in appliances, buildings and industry. Establishment of a National Clean Production and Eco-efficiency Centre, and promoting industrial symbiosis in organized industrial zones aim to develop sustainable methods for managing natural resources used by the public and private sectors, in line with Turkey's development priorities as stated in the Ninth Plan.

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Together with other UN Agencies and government partners, UNDP coordinates the participatory adaptation strategy development process to enhance Turkey's adaptive capacity against vulnerabilities of the country against climate change which are water resources, food security, climate-induced natural hazards, biodiversity and ecosystem services, and public health. By supporting community-based adaptation initiatives, in partnership with local governments, NGOs, CSOs and universities, UNDP works to protect the livelihoods of local communities and directly touching people's lives through development practices.

Turkey receives support from UNDP in meeting her international commitments under other UN Conventions, such as Convention on Biodiversity and Bucharest Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution. The joint efforts of UNDP and the Ministry Environment and Forestry on enhancing protected area management systems and strengthening Turkey's protected areas network secure climate-resilient ecosystems such as forests, wetlands and marine areas, to halt biodiversity degradation and combat desertification.

Although Turkey has witnessed impressive economic growth over the past decades (112% since 1980), it continues to experience serious regional and gender discrepancies



in income and human development in general. In responding to these challenges, the government launched a project for the poorest South East region of Turkey, the GAP region. This project was broadly based on a competitiveness agenda developed in 2007 by the GAP regional development agency and UNDP with support from EU. This competitiveness agenda outlined four areas of unique region-specific strengths that would have far reaching impact on job creation and human development, one of which was renewable energy. In the follow up the competitiveness agenda and in support of the government supported South Eastern Anatolia Project (GAP), a regional "renewable energy and energy efficiency strategy and action plan" was developed and launched in November 2010. This was the first of its kind in Turkey and represents a unique landmark in the effort to strengthen climate resilience on the local level and provide a model for how to combine economic growth and sustainable development. For the development of the strategy, and with top national leadership, UNDP accompanied the process in every step. UNDP mobilized a team of globally renowned international experts, supported by a group of high-caliber national experts in the field of regional development, renewable energies and energy efficiency. The strategy and action plan is unique in the sense that it incorporates priorities relating to renewable energy and energy efficiency into a wider regional development context that covers, inter alia, employment creation, social cohesion and equality. The Regional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Action Plan will demonstrate that economic development can be achieved without increasing carbon footprint and will carefully study lessons learned, scale up for advise on legislative amendments and will be replicated in other regions of Turkey. With Turkey's leveraging power and regional leader in South-South cooperation, the strategy will also serve as a mode and inspiration for neighboring countries and other close allies of Turkey.

While contributing to the development priorities listed in the Ninth Plan, UNDP helped Turkey reach her MDG targets. In Turkey, there is an increasing realisation that climate change is a direct threat in particularly attaining MDGs on reducing extreme poverty and hunger (MDG 1), gender equality and empowerment of women (MDG 3) and environmental sustainability (MDG 7). This was particularly pronounced after the debates organised by UNDP in launching the conclusions and policy recommendations of the "Human Development Report 2007/2008 - Fighting climate change: Human solidarity in a divided world". UNDP worked very closely with the Government in providing technical support to the Prime Ministry State Planning Organisation in preparing the first national MDG Progress Report in 2005. Turkey has since taken an increasingly leading role in embracing the MDGs in the region and organised together with UNDP and United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), a regional MDG conference in June 2010 in Istanbul with some 25 countries represented. The conference represented a landmark initiative in the region to discuss collectively the MDGs, what had worked and what had not worked and why. In leading up to the Conference, UNDP provided guidance to the second national MDG report. The 2005 Turkey MDG Report was an important reference in the identification of the development targets addressed in the Ninth Plan.

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Although there have been efforts to mainstream MDG 3 into UNDP programmes in general, its link to climate change has been evident following the inclusion of a gender component under the intervention 'Enhancing the Capacity of Turkey to Adapt to Climate Change', as stated in the 2010 UNDP Assessment of Development Results Report (ADR). In the context of this intervention, UNDP efficiently addressed the issue of gender equality through participatory discussion platforms and pilot implementations. Moreover, UNDP facilitated the mainstreaming of climate change and gender in the drafting of the policy on national disaster risk reduction in particular, as women are considered to be within the vulnerable groups regarding this issue.



UNDP and Turkish Government's cooperation in the attainment of MDGs and enhancing environment, climate and energy policies of Turkey, leads the national development agenda to a low carbon economy. These are important efforts in Turkey's European Union accession work.

As a candidate country for full accession to the EU, Turkey's efforts to harmonize with the EU acquis regarding the environment and climate change focus on the important areas stated in the criteria of the Environment Chapter that was opened for negotiations in December 2009. Integrating measures for water management and green energy into

Turkey's sector and regional policies, enhancing the market mechanisms to benefit from the carbon markets, ensuring nature protection and sustaining ecosystem services are among the challenging issues for harmonising with the EU for which UNDP provided and will continue to provide support to the Turkish Government.

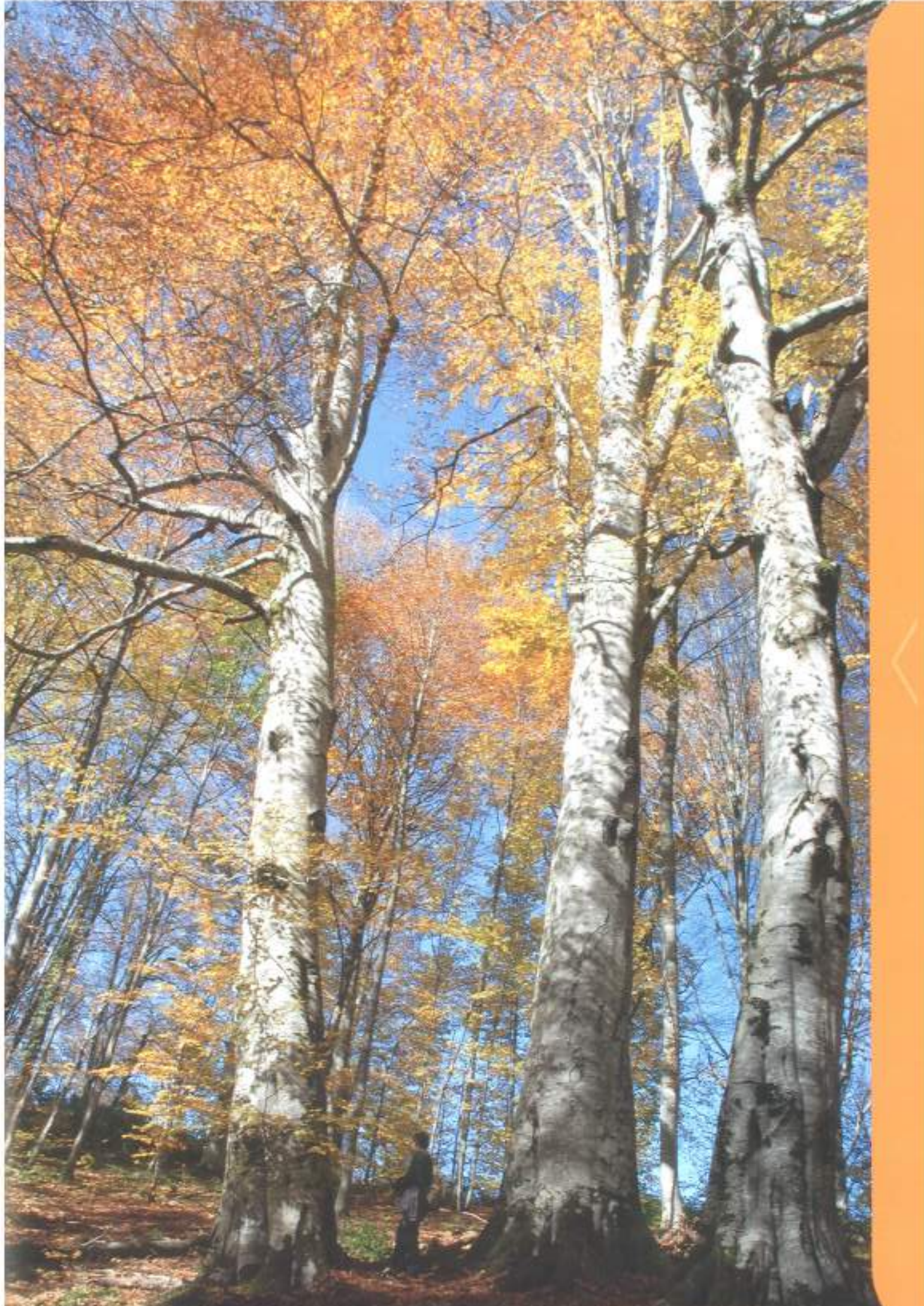
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For the past two decades UNDP's support has been transformational in shaping Turkey's climate change policy and international negotiations. UNDP has made a substantial contribution to increasing awareness on climate change issues within the government, NGOs and the private sector and to establishing the institutional and policy framework to

promote climate change interventions. UNDP's capacity to engage local communities in environmental and climate change initiatives is of substantial added value.

In supporting priority areas that address the country's most urgent climate change and sustainable development issues, UNDP has been a trusted friend and partner of the Turkish Government and will continue to make concrete contributions to Turkey's MDGs achievement, EU accession and global standing.





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