

OBJECTIVE 02

To promote human rights and democracy, involving citizens in policy dialogue, design and monitoring

THE DARK FACE OF THE GREEN ISLAND

HASAN SARPTEN

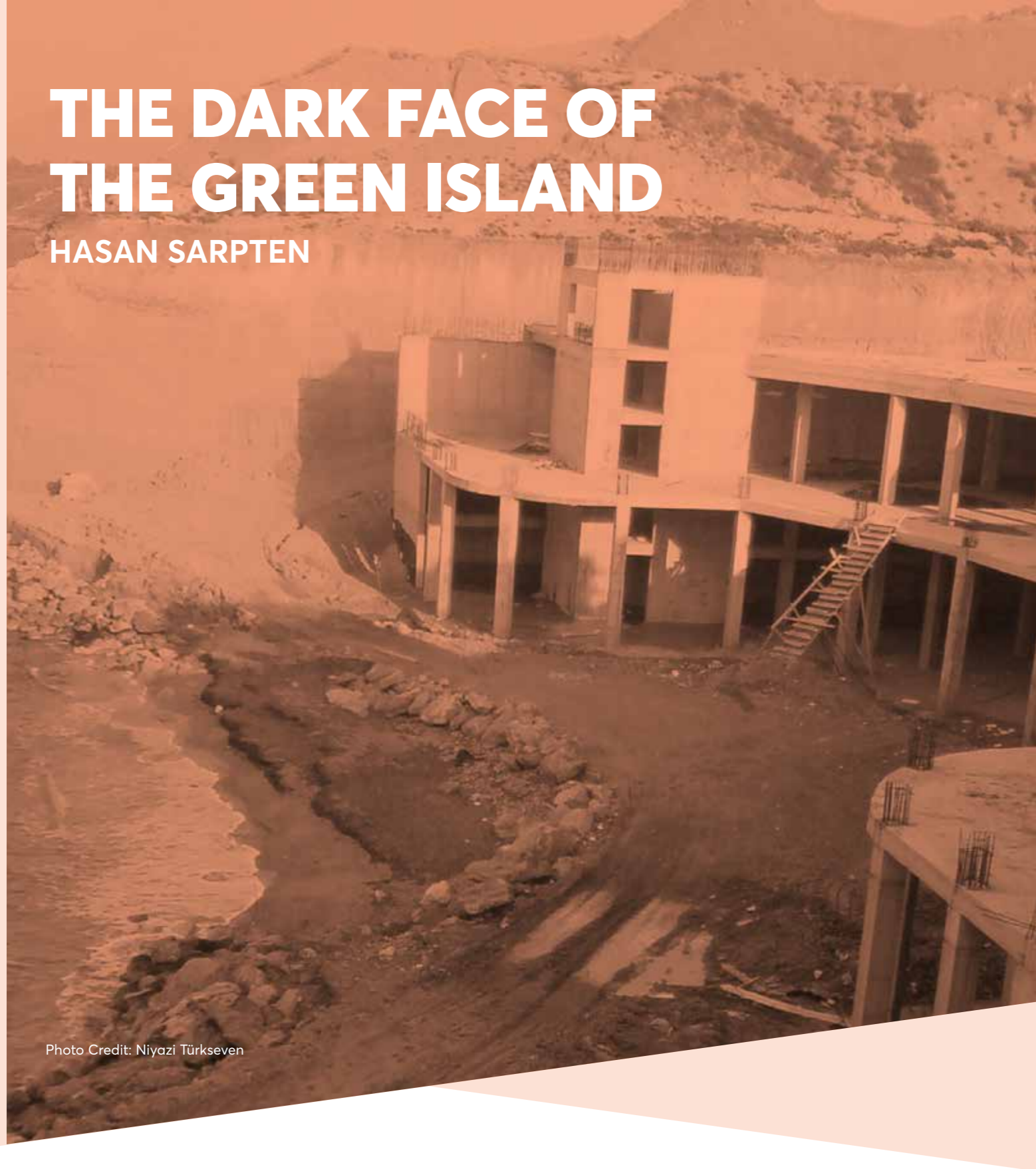


Photo Credit: Niyazi Türkseven



THIS ACTION INVOLVED

A book and a short film entitled "The Dark Face of the Green Island".

Broadcasting on social media of the short film about the impacts of construction activities on the environment in March 2018.

Distribution of the book and the short film in schools and with civil society organizations and decision-makers to raise awareness on environmental protection.

ABOUT HASAN SARPTEN

Since his graduation from university as a biologist, Hasan Sarpten has been working in civil society for about 15 years. Being one of the spokespersons for the Environmental Platform, Hasan intends to create visual media contents on environmental problems in the northern part of Cyprus.

STORY OF THE ACTION

The action aimed to address the environmental degradation in the northern part of Cyprus due to construction activities, infrastructure projects and other economic activities (i.e. stone quarries, mines, etc.). Hasan Sarpten, together with a team of professional photographers, documented the pollution created by such activities and produced a photographic book and short film to show how the "green" island is turning "black". He distributed the materials to raise awareness among youth and students but also shared them with duty bearers and the wider public.



"New constructions, development and economic projects, do not, unfortunately, take into consideration the importance of the environment. In recent years, this situation has led to excessive pollution and the destruction of wildlife in the northern part of Cyprus. The future of Cyprus is at serious stake due to numerous problems including quarrying, mine tailings, garbage and waste management, deforestation, unplanned urbanization, air and marine pollution and depletion of biodiversity. To raise awareness on environmental issues in a striking way and develop sustainable solutions, we conducted a study entitled 'The Dark Face of the Green Island' within the framework of Grow Civic. Our aim was to make visible the constant environmental pollution that we choose to underestimate and normalise."
Hasan Sarpten



According to Sarpten, scientific studies reveal that young people are among the most environmentally conscious members of society but that they fail to take action on the issue. Hasan believes that today's fast-paced life makes us accept problems like environmental pollution which prevents us from solving them. He aimed at developing a result-oriented attitude among the youth and decision-makers and encouraged them to take action.



"The most important output of the action, without a doubt, has been awareness-raising. Only conscious people are open to change and to seeking solutions. In this context, we have exposed the darkening of the northern part of Cyprus - once called the "green island" - as a result of the pollution and destruction of nature."
Hasan Sarpten



TO FIND
MORE ABOUT
THE ACTION



 civicspacesivilalan
 hsarpten@gmail.com



Photo Credit: Hasan Sarpten

Hasan has documented the situation in the northern part of Cyprus and created a "pollution database" which has enabled research and solution-seeking efforts by different members of society. This was materialised into a book that was presented to duty bearers, demanding to find lasting solutions to the environmental problems.

RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

The action invited stakeholders to acknowledge the whole picture: from human rights deficiencies to the fundamental right to live in a healthy environment. Moreover, by bringing together different stakeholders, the study has fostered dialogue and cooperation among Turkish Cypriot local bodies and civil society representatives.

The selection of 100 influential photographs have brought into light the existing environmental problems, particularly in an era when people are less inclined to read books and where images are gaining more and more importance.



WHAT'S NEXT?

The book, prepared with the support of Grow Civic, encountered high demand and the short film reached a large audience. Hasan will continue his individual actions and within civil society organizations to seek solutions for environmental problems.



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