

OBJECTIVE 04

To support the exchange of good practice, allowing the creation and expansion of citizen networks, initiatives and platforms, including support for voluntarism



TRAINING FOR ECO-FRIENDLY CAMPING

TUĞBERK EMİRZADE

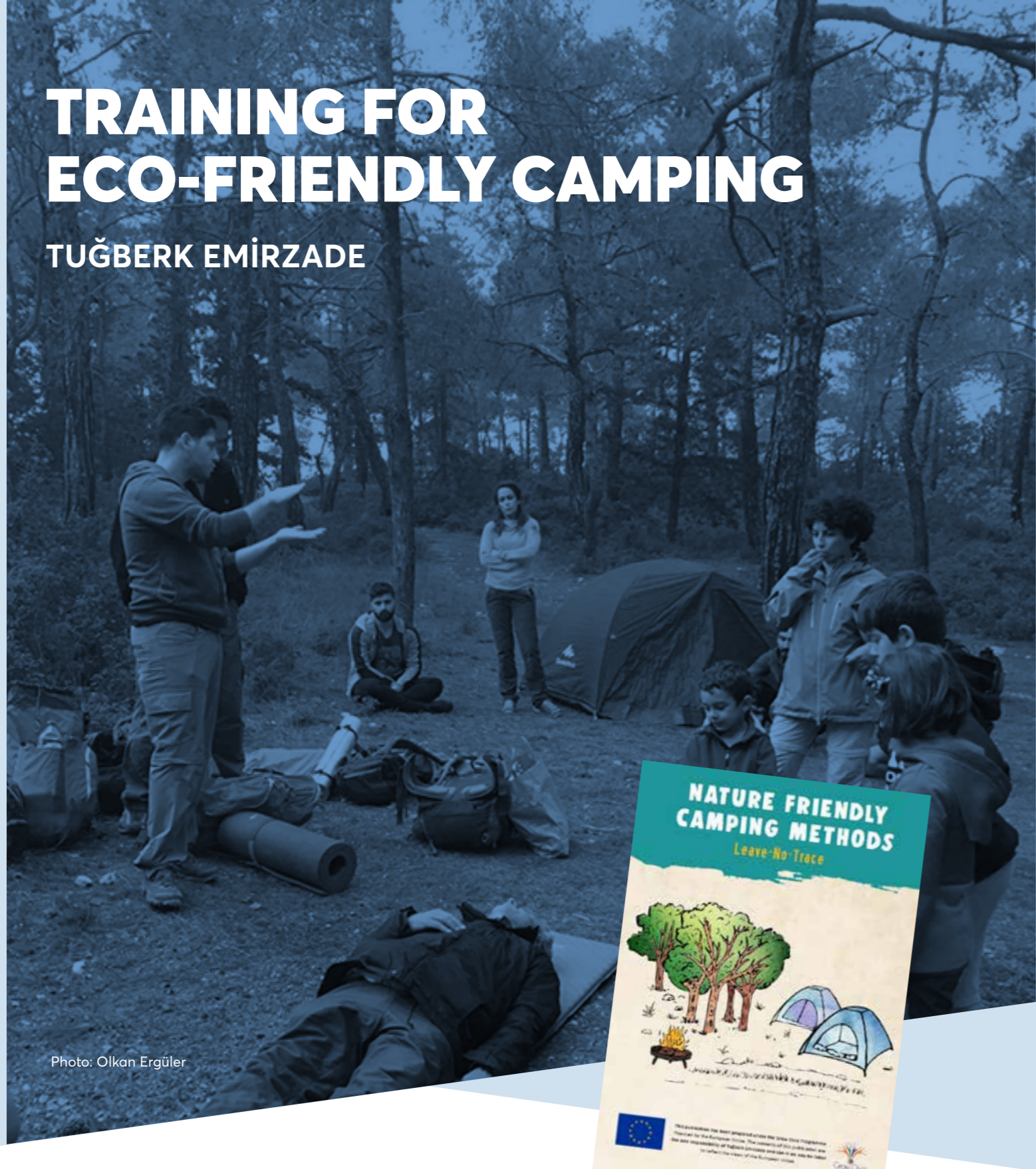


Photo: Olkan Ergüler



THIS ACTION INVOLVED

Creation of a handbook, "Nature Friendly Camping Methods", on the internationally accepted principles of "leave-no-trace" in English and Turkish languages.

A 2-days workshop (18-19 November 2017) on eco-friendly camping methods, organised as an overnight camping activity for a group of people from school camping and scouts' clubs, outdoor hiking and camping groups, and representatives of relevant local bodies.

ABOUT TUĞBERK EMİRZADE

Tuğberk Emirzade is a biologist and a camping enthusiast. He has been organising guided walks, climbing tours and educational games in nature for children since 2012. He is passionate about nature and has extensive knowledge on hiking trails in Karpasia/Karpaz Peninsula, Kyrenia Mountains, and the northwest of the island.

STORY OF THE ACTION

Tuğberk Emirzade, through Grow Civic, aimed to draw attention to how irresponsible camping activities could cause a negative impact on natural sites, while raising awareness and increasing capacity on responsible and eco-friendly camping. He diagnosed the problem as a lack of knowledge, and aimed to solve it through raising awareness, promotion, advocacy, and hands-on practices for active learning. The action targeted mainly camping enthusiasts, outdoor hiking and camping groups, as well as camping and scouts' clubs in schools and relevant local bodies.

"Camping has become popular, and many people are camping without realizing that some of their actions have a negative impact on nature. People camping on beaches may not realize that moving headlamps late in the night may scare away marine turtles waiting to come to the beach to lay eggs. They also may not know that there is a way to make a campfire without overheating the underground rhizomes of wild irises, bulbs of sand lily, or tubers of orchids. This is mainly due to lack of knowledge. Campers might unknowingly park their 4x4's on top of the sprawling endemic perennial plant of Karpasia/Karpaz (Teucriumkarpasiticum)."

Tuğberk Emirzade



One of the most important outcomes of the action was the handbook, named "Nature Friendly Camping Methods". It covered the internationally accepted principles of "leave-no-trace" in detail, so that any user could practice these principles without having to consult other sources. It also covers the "do's and don'ts" of camping, locations of sensitive fauna and flora species, and information on seasonality and threats. The handbook also include the local legal framework to inform the users about the rules on biodiversity, environment, and forest areas. It further gives information and recommends precautionary actions on the sensitive local habitats and species in Cyprus. The methods presented in the handbook were introduced and promoted through a workshop in which participants got hands-on learning experience. The copies of the handbooks were widely distributed and shared with various stakeholders.

"Hard copies of the handbook have been distributed to local outdoor shops and tourist information centers. The major camping groups were informed. After the initial workshop, three more camping trips were organized with equipment from the action. In these camping activities, the principles of eco-friendly camping were discussed, and methods were demonstrated. Three civil society organizations were trained and they are now more accountable in their nature-friendly activities. The handbook has become a reference book in the library of the actors concerned about the environment."

Tuğberk Emirzade

RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

The action had a strong advocacy scope, as it involved many different actors in society, mainly the duty bearers who could sustain the results by adopting necessary changes in legal texts. The handbook was presented to the local body responsible for forestry and the local body responsible for environment protection. According to Emirzade, the local body responsible for forestry is working on the legal procedure to add a paragraph to the section under their legal text about recreational use of forests, stating that "a permit for camping, or pitching a tent is issued with the condition that the applicant agrees to follow the recommendations described in the official booklet issued by the local bodies". The local body responsible for forestry has not only contributed to the printing of the handbook, but also published it through their website. The representatives of the local body participated in the camp, experienced it themselves, and supported Emirzade to sustain the results. The information provided in the handbook guided them to improve the outdated rules and legal texts about camping. The action strengthened the ability of duty bearers to meet their obligations and improve the capacity of rights-holders, not only to claim their due, but also to be responsible for their actions while enjoying camping.



Photo Credit: Olkan Ergüler

WHAT'S NEXT?

Emirzade continues to organise camping trips and disseminate necessary knowledge on nature-friendly camping for participants. One of his upcoming plans is to organise a bi-communal camping trip.

TO FIND
MORE ABOUT
THE ACTION



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