

OBJECTIVE 02

To promote Human Rights and
Democracy, involving citizens in policy
dialogue, design and monitoring

LOOKING AT CLIMATE CHANGE FROM CYPRUS

Cyprus Turkish Biologists Association for
Research and Protection of Nature (Bio-Der)

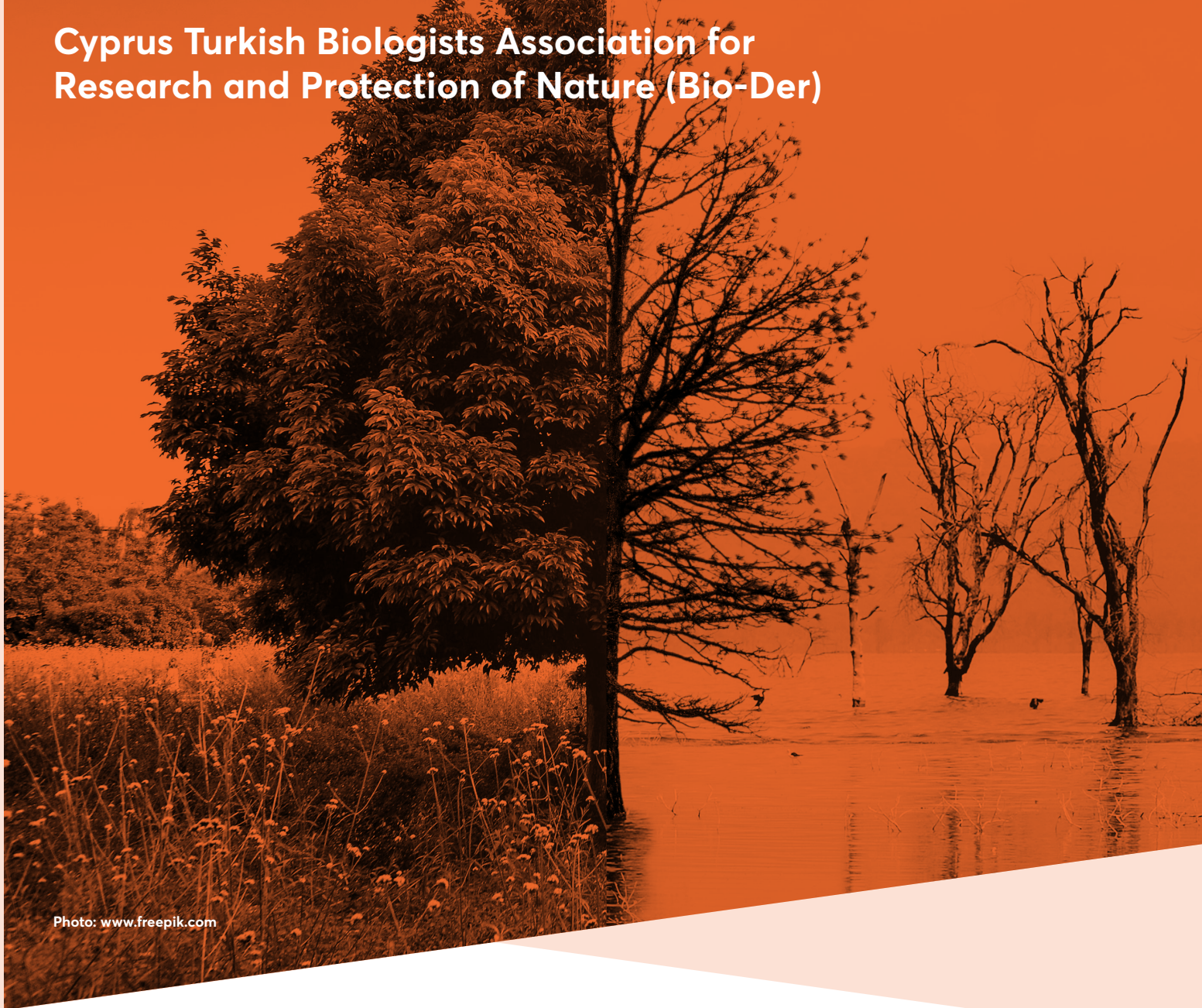


Photo: www.freepik.com



THIS ACTION INVOLVED

Drawing attention to the impact of global climate change that Cyprus faces.

Participation of two members of Bio-Der to the council meeting of the European countries biologists association (ECBA) held on 7-9 February 2020, in Utrecht, the Netherlands.

Setting up a bi-communal committee to compile a list of recommendations and demands to mitigate the impacts of climate change in Cyprus.

Production of a "Where we are in climate change ?" book.

Production and dissemination of two short videos on "Extreme Climate Events" and "Changes in Biodiversity" through media and social media channels.

ABOUT THE CYPRUS TURKISH BIOLOGISTS ASSOCIATION FOR RESEARCH AND PROTECTION OF NATURE (BIO-DER)

Founded in 1999, Bio-Der, a civil society organisation consisting of Turkish Cypriot biologists, aims to investigate the natural flora and fauna of Cyprus, cooperate with organisations working in the same field; develop scientific projects on nature, environment and health issues. It is also actively involved in publishing a scientific journal, holding seminars and conferences on biological diversity and environment and working with local bodies to prepare textbooks for secondary and high schools.

STORY OF THE ACTION

Through this action, Bio-Der aimed to exchange information and knowledge with their European counterparts and draw attention to Cyprus's global climate change. Bio-Der developed recommendations and demands for climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies via bicommunal efforts to achieve these objectives. They also raised political actors' and local bodies' awareness on the issue and advocated addressing it timely.

Chairperson Hasan Sarpten explains the motivation for this action:

"Compared to other countries in the world, Cyprus has the least contribution to climate change. Due to its geographic position, it will be among the most affected world regions by the negative impacts of climate change. We do believe that the Bio-Der needs to benefit from the knowledge and experiences of its European and Greek Cypriot counterparts and carry out preparation and adaptation works towards the impacts of climate change. We aim to put forward ecologic demands by citizens and carry out advocacy works to urge political actors and local bodies to take action."

Accordingly, two members of the association participated in the council meeting of the ECBA that was held on 7-9 February 2020 in the Netherlands to exchange knowledge and experience on climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies with their European counterparts.

The association also joined efforts with their Greek Cypriot counterparts by setting up a six-member bi-communal committee consisting of activists, academics and experts on climate change. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, an initially planned bicommunal forum event was canceled. Instead, the committee exchanged knowledge, documents and materials online and compiled a list of recommendations and demands to mitigate the impacts of climate change in Cyprus.

The committee gathered its recommendations and demands in the book "Where we are in climate change?" The book was presented to political actors, and local bodies to urge them to address climate change.

In parallel, the Bio-Der produced two short videos in Turkish with Greek and English subtitles: "Extreme Climate Events" and "Changes in Biodiversity". The videos feature the impact of climate change on biological diversity in Cyprus. They were disseminated through media (including local television channels) and social media channels to influence public opinion in demanding more actions to address climate change. The videos reached over 5,000 people on social media in the first week of their publication.

RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

Through its human rights approach, this action has contributed to raising awareness on global climate change, affecting every country, including Cyprus and on the citizens rights to live in a sustainable and healthy environment. It has also promoted citizens' active involvement and advocacy towards political actors and local bodies to shape public strategies and policies on ecological issues. The action also fostered the expansion of citizens networks with relevant stakeholders from European countries and the Greek Cypriot community.

"Through this action, we wanted to initiate the first steps to raise awareness on the negative impacts of climate change, and we believe we have achieved our goal. The action is also the first ever study jointly conducted by Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots on climate change, an ecological problem that transcends any boundaries. It has given us a general view of the island as a whole in terms of the climate crisis."

Hasan Sarpten

WHAT'S NEXT?

Bio-Der is committed to continuing its climate change advocacy to raise awareness and encourage duty bearers to take action on climate change. The organisation also encourages local bodies to introduce a climate change curriculum in the Turkish Cypriot education system.



TO FIND
MORE ABOUT
THE ACTION



www.bioder.org



/biologlardernegi/

sivil civic Χώρος
alanspace Πολιτών

This Project
is funded
by the
European Union

