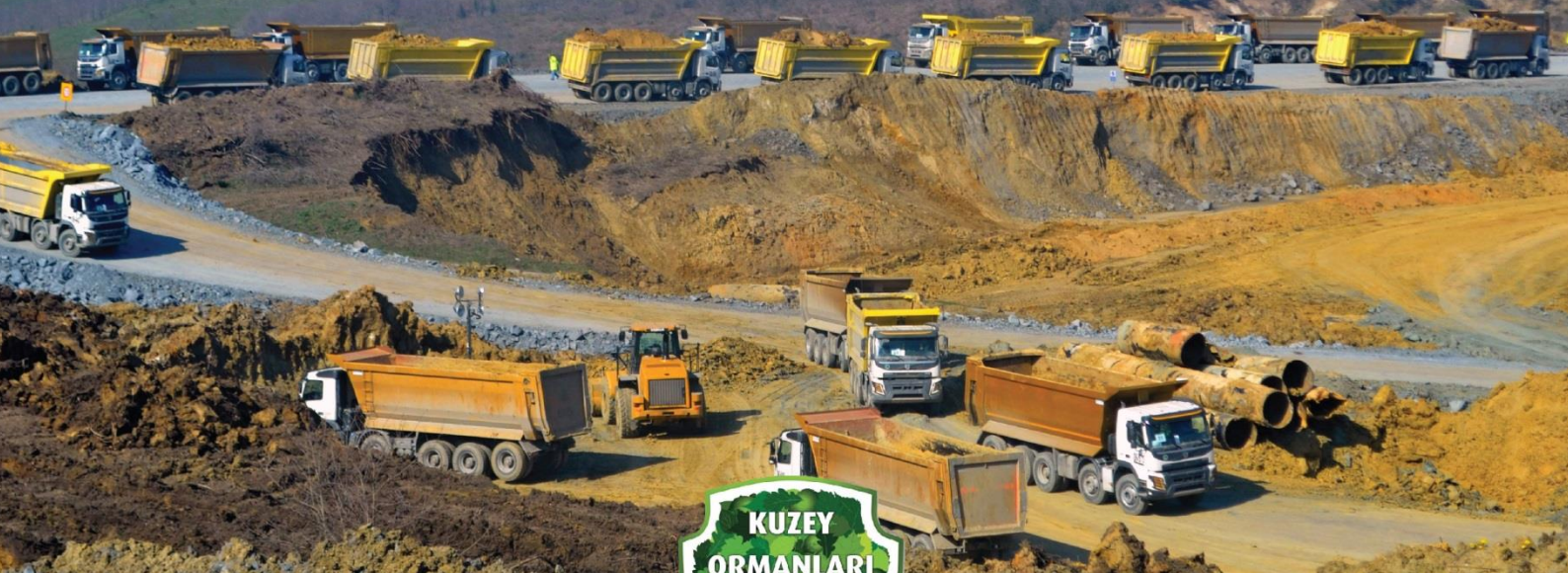


# THE THIRD AIRPORT PROJECT



**Vis-a-Vis**  
**Life, Nature, Environment,**  
**People and Law**



March 2015, İstanbul

**The Third Airport Project**  
**Vis-a-Vis**  
**Life, Nature, Environment, People and Law**



Prepared by: Northern Forests Defense  
March 2015, Istanbul

## NORTHERN FORESTS DEFENSE

Northern Forests Defense (NFD / KOS) is a movement that advocates for the protection of the ecologically interconnected and diverse area extending from Sapanca to Strandzha Mountains consisting of the last forest lands, watersheds, and farm lands along with many endemic plant and animal species. In accordance with this goal, it has established itself as a movement that organizes and fights against any urban or rural project that does not take nature, reason or science into account, regardless of its scale or justification, while making sure its focus stays on northern İstanbul.

NFD, founded in July 2013 as part of the rising struggle against the urban and environmental plunder that has become even more visible after the Gezi Park resistance, tries to bring those working to protect their living spaces in their own region against the “creative destruction” of the capital together. At the same time, it tries to ensure that knowledge and experience are shared among defenders of life.

NFD is against all kinds of projects that destroy ecosystems, including but not limited to the “mega projects” such as the 3<sup>rd</sup> bridge, Canal İstanbul, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> airport. Within this framework, to be able to defend the rights of the communities living in the rural north as a part of nature, NFD builds solidarity with every individual and organization that thinks, acts and organizes in accordance with similar goals and tries to amplify the resistance by standing together with them. In addition, NFD defends nature with its animals, insects and plants, briefly all beings, in not only İstanbul and Turkey but also on a global scale.

NFD is independent of all kinds of economic, political or ideological organizations. It makes its decisions in its widely announced weekly forums that are open to everyone and in which each individual has equal rights to speak and participate in the decision-making processes.

NFD advocates for self-governance and tries to put this philosophy into practice within itself, and in all areas of life. In parallel with this, it rejects all hierarchy adopting an organizational system where the distribution of the tasks is alternated.



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## **Acronyms**

BETAM: Bahçeşehir University Economic and Social Research Center

ÇMO: Chamber of Environmental Engineers

DHMI: General Directorate of State Airports Authority

EIA: Environmental Impact Assessment

FED: The Central Bank of the United States

HPP: Hydroelectric Power Plant

IKK: Istanbul Provincial Coordination Committee

JMO: Chamber of Geological Engineers

KÖİ: Public Private Partnership (PPP)

NFD / KOS: Northern Forests Defense

TEMA: The Turkish Foundation for Combatting Soil Erosion, for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats

TEPAV The Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey

TMMOB: Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects

TOKİ: Mass Housing Development Administration

TÜİK: Turkish Statistical Institute

## **Appendices**

1. CHP (The Republican People's Party) 2015 Central Administration Budget Draft Law Counter Vote Article Public Private Partnership Section

2. The query on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport Project submitted by Prof. Dr. Zerrin Bayrakdar to AKP ( Justice and Development Party) Headquarters

3. Decision of Istanbul 4<sup>th</sup> Administrative Court on the Suspension of the EIA report on January 21, 2014

## INTRODUCTION

The area intended for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project falls within the Northern Forests of Istanbul. The project area spans a field of 10 km by length and 7.5 km by width amongst the Villages Yeniköy, Akpınar and Ağalı in the north of Istanbul. In this region skirting along the coast of Black Sea are woods, forestlands, lakes, ponds, brooks and sand fields. The side effects to emerge both during the construction and operation processes and after the launch taken into account altogether, the opening of the North that has so far remained the most intact area in the city to infrastructure and construction projects means that the sustainability of the city is under threat.

Northern Forests Defense (KOS) 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport Project Work Group’s Istanbul 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport Report has been prepared and brought to public attention by taking into consideration the mistakes made in site selection for this airport, the reports produced by the agencies and institutions who are parties to the matter and also the information provided in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) reports that are necessary for such an investment to be made. Our objective is; to render in ordinary language and thus make understandable the serious alerts, warnings and scientific determinations by professional chambers and environmental organizations about the project’s site selection; to gather the titles emphasized in one report and skipped in the other and so to bring into view thoroughly how Istanbul will be dragged into destruction with this project of city-slaughter and ecological-demolishment, before the opinion of national and international public. We are grateful to all professional chambers whose reports we benefited from as well as Baheşehir University Economic and Social Research Center (BETAM), The Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV) and The Turkish Foundation for Combatting Soil Erosion, for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats (TEMA) without whose valuable contributions this report would be incomplete. We also would like to thank Economist Mr. Mustafa Sönmez who didn’t deprive us of his estimable advices and contributions in the economy section of the report.

We want both to share with public the fatal picture that even the project’s EIA reports<sup>1</sup> have failed to disguise and to open the scientific qualities of its EIA reports to questioning. As we have demonstrated with quotes, we are revealing intentional lacks and trivializations especially in the latest EIA report dated March 2014 and also the fact that critical information in the first report such as the number of trees or “lake/pond” definitions has been omitted from the latest reports. EIA reports are far from being scientific; they are superficially written and mostly prepared in a manner where the same texts are repeated twice or three times under different titles by copying-pasting method. Moreover, they do not include proper technical data or produce solutions to the problems which themselves have listed and are prepared perfunctorily with general interpretations. Furthermore, the tender of the project was made without an EIA positive decision being made, which is against the 6th Article of the EIA Regulation; therefore both EIA process and reports are at the same time lawless.

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<sup>1</sup> March 2013: 214 pgs :[http://www.csb.gov.tr/db/ced/editordosya/istanbul\\_3\\_havalimaniCED\\_Raporu.pdf](http://www.csb.gov.tr/db/ced/editordosya/istanbul_3_havalimaniCED_Raporu.pdf)  
April 2013: 292 pgs : [http://www.csb.gov.tr/db/ced/editordosya/nihai\\_ced\\_istanbul.pdf](http://www.csb.gov.tr/db/ced/editordosya/nihai_ced_istanbul.pdf)  
March 2014: 1347 pgs :  
[http://www.csb.gov.tr/turkce/dosya/ced/Istanbul3\\_HavalimaniCEDRaporu\\_tum\\_mobil\\_2.pdf](http://www.csb.gov.tr/turkce/dosya/ced/Istanbul3_HavalimaniCEDRaporu_tum_mobil_2.pdf)



In addition to the above-mentioned, we also want to draw attention not only to the fact that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project will not be able to be economically efficient under the existing global and local conditions but also to the pillage plans of the firms who undertake the project about the area. Besides, by bringing forward the other projects of the firms who undertake this project that disregard human rights, the right to environment, relevant laws and court decisions completely, we lay bare the dirty hands of those who plunder the rich lands of the country, now reaching for Istanbul's lungs, North Forests with this project.

In a period where recession warnings are made for Turkish economy by IMF and credit rating agencies' negative reports on the country's economy are published one after another because of economic indicators such as speculative growth based on hot money, increasing unemployment and inflation, the decrease in growth rate, fragile Turkish Lira against foreign currencies; especially when global economic and political dynamics are taken into account such as the negative impacts of the change in interest rate policies of FED (the central bank of the United States), the conflicts in Syria and Iraq, the economic recession which Russia is going through as one of the most important markets for our tourism, trade and construction sectors, low growth in Europe that is our biggest market and the possibility that the effects of the tension between Ukraine and Russia will expand, the picture drawn by the Turkey's economy doesn't seem so pleasant.

Under these circumstances, some queries come to mind about the return of the financings of the mega projects including 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport. Hence, unconvinced, international credit institutions did not grant a loan for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport and consequently, it was announced<sup>2</sup> that the loan of almost 4.5 billion Euros will be supplied by three Turkish Banks, the two of which, Ziraat Bank and Halkbank, are state banks and one of which is a private bank, namely Denizbank that was bought by Russia's Sberbank a couple of years ago. Nearly 8 months after this announcement, Mr. Nihat Özdemir, Chairman of Limak Holding that is one of the contractors, stated that *"they were about to finish a financing model of 4.5 billion Euros with 7 banks"*<sup>3</sup>. Although a project of gigantic scale as the world's biggest airport is being mentioned, we are faced with a *"concept"* project with a vague future where it cannot be understood what is real, with the financiers announced being changed from one declaration to another and furthermore, very importantly, the site delivery of which couldn't still be fulfilled. Thusly, as stated on page 6 of the project's EIA Report, *"within the scope of the projects where the Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications goes out to tender with a build-operate-transfer model, all constructions are of concept qualification as preliminary layout plans are prepared"*.

Turkish Court of Accounts gave wide coverage to the problems relating to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport while examining the accounts of General Directorate of State Airports Authority (DHMI). In its 2013 Audit Report for the General Directorate of State Airports Authority, the Court of Accounts emphasized that the site delivery couldn't still be done even though 1.5 years had passed since the tender. The unsuitability of the soil of the field is pointed out in the warnings made by scientists; as a matter of fact, the Consortium who undertook the project is still trying to compact the soil. In the report, it is established that there have been deviations even at the airports whose feasibility studies were done and it is documented

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<sup>2</sup> <http://emlakkulisi.com/3-havalimani-icin-uc-yerli-bankadan-kredi/283136>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/3-havalimaniyla-ilgili-flas/ekonomi/detay/2019340/default.htm>

that payments were made to relevant firms because annual passenger guarantees didn't meet the expectations and the General Directorate of State Airports Authority was inflicted substantial damages. In this case, it wouldn't be wrong to say that the General Directorate of State Airports Authority may be inflicted damages against the passenger guarantees given for the 3rd Airport. And we will all pay a heavy price for this for so many years!

In summary, as defenders of nature and life, we deem it a conscientiously responsibility towards next generations and a sustainable Istanbul to expose this slaughters-project with all its realities and documents that were escaped from notice. Our debt to future generations, our conscientiously responsibility arising from being human and our desire to restore honor to the pearl of the world, Istanbul that has been turned into an unearned income machine the economic gears of which revolve around construction, have propelled us to write this report. Although utmost care was taken in covering all the factors, we cannot say that a complete list of all the breaches and slaughters that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project will cause is provided here; however we have no doubt that human rights and environment defenders will improve the report. After all, this report belongs to no one but the public!

## 1. AIRPORT OR “URBAN COMPLEX”?

We have been experiencing a ruthless period where natural areas that make Istanbul, Istanbul and ecosystems of thousands of years are being rapidly consumed under the state-controlled transformation that prioritizes capital gain over public gain and is aimed at capital accumulation. Instead of being planned as a city whose habitants can lead a healthy and happy life, Istanbul is wanted to be transformed into a growth engine that would shoulder the country's economy.

Mega transportation and infrastructure projects like 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport, 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge and Canal Istanbul jeopardize the economic, ecological and social sustainability of the city while completely disregarding the principles of planning and urban science. Rather than their declared purposes, these projects that feed each other as a package program are the last resort to which an economy of ringing alarm bells has turned; they are the projects of transforming Istanbul into a locomotive that carries Turkey's economy. In order to serve an economy that has quit producing and started to spin its gears on construction and real estate, Istanbul's last virgin areas are sacrificed and the sustainability of the city is risked.

This intention can be tracked in the explanations of relevant people and institutions, starting from the EIA reports themselves. While the necessity for a new airport in Istanbul is stated on pages 2, 29, 34 and on the further copied and pasted pages of the latest EIA report dated March 2014<sup>4</sup>, the intention to turn the city into a growth engine is clearly declared too: *“Aerotropolis: comes from the merging of the words “aero” air and “tropolis” metropolis (big city). Istanbul, which is the locomotive of our country's economy, fits into this definition perfectly.”*

### 1.1 In Whose Interest Is Such A Big Airport?

It is said that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport that is planned to be built in a total 7650-hectare land and is claimed to carry 150 million passengers annually will be one of the biggest airports in the world. Why is such a large area needed for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport, which is planned to be 1.5 times bigger than the world's busiest airport, Atlanta (USA)? If we take a look at the acreages and passenger capacities of the most important airports below, seeing that Atlanta Airport is built on 1625 hectares of land with a 95 million passengers, 3.500 hectares is sufficient for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport that is thought to serve 150 million passengers. So why has such a large land been considered?

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.csb.gov.tr/turkce/dosya/ced/Istanbul3\\_HavalimaniCEDRaporu\\_tum\\_mobil\\_2.pdf](http://www.csb.gov.tr/turkce/dosya/ced/Istanbul3_HavalimaniCEDRaporu_tum_mobil_2.pdf)

Unless otherwise stated, the EIA referred to in all texts is the third and currently the latest EIA report dated March 2014. Three EIA reports have been published on the 3.Airport and a fourth as the international EIA is on its way. Even this situation is an indicator of how EIA reports are written without any seriousness or profound research. As seen in the quotes, sentence fragments and spelling errors are found in the report. The EIA process has been reviewed in the relevant sections of our report



Figure 1. The sizes of the busiest airports in the world.

Chart 1. The sizes of the busiest airports in the world.

Airport	Annual Passenger Capacity	Acreage
Atatürk Airport:	44 million	1178 hectares
ABD Atlanta Airport: (The busiest airport in the world)	95 million	1625 hectares
Beijing Airport:	82 million	2330 hectares
London Heathrow (The busiest airport in Europe)	70 million	1216 hectares
Frankfurt Airport:	57 million	2000 hectares
Tokyo Airport:	68 million	1445 hectares
Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport:	60 million	3100 hectares
Dubai Airport:	57 million	1445 hectares

A figure closely related to the subject, Chairman of AKFEN Holding and TAV Airports Holding Mr. Hamdi Akın also criticized the largeness of the area kept for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport. Very importantly, he stated that they had planned to increase the capacity of Atatürk Airport to 100-120 million passengers, but this hadn't been able to be actualized:

*"We tried so hard for the construction of a third runway at Atatürk Airport. We had projects and mock-ups prepared. It was possible and Turkish Airlines wanted it too. We labored over it together with Turkish Airlines. We were planning to increase the capacity of Atatürk Airport to 100-120 million passengers. Istanbul needs a third airport but I wouldn't have kept the airport to be built this large. I mean I would have kept it more doable, simpler. And I would transfer the surplus capacity of Atatürk Airport here and gradually enhance it here. I would have enlarged it slowly, not in one go. I believe it would be an easier, more doable and more attainable goal<sup>5</sup>."*

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.airportist.com/ucuncu-havaalani-yerine-ahl-buyutulebilinirdi.html>

The views of Mr. Candan Karlitekin who was the Chairman of Turkish Airlines during its big leap between 2003 and 2010 are in the same direction too:

*“My basic claim is that you can meet the annual demand of above 120 million passengers by building a parallel runway for each Atatürk Airport and Sabiha Gökçen Airport with a two billion dollar cost for each. Therefore constructing a new airport is unnecessary, is a waste of resources. Even the busiest areas in the largest cities do not reach a 100 million capacity. Because above this capacity, flying corridors in the sky cannot be available during normal operational hours anyway. There is no feasibility to the capacity calculation conducted by taking into account the passengers that the field serves and the diameter of the load collection area. The opportunity arisen from the removal of the military facilities from Atatürk Airport should be utilized. As far as I know, the railway route to Europe can very well be passed through Çorlu, which is at a 90 km distance. There, an airport can be built in 8-10 years that would generally serve to long-distance flight points that have flight ranges above 7-8 hours at a very small expense. And transition from this airport to Atatürk Airport can be provided by high-speed trains in 20-25 minutes. If the inevitable need for growth of Istanbul is planned towards İzmit without over brimming the north, then Sabiha Gökçen Airport will meet a serious amount of transportation demand with a parallel runway<sup>6</sup>”.*

But the path to the answer for the enormous size of the project lies in a quite different place. England’s Grimshaw Architects, Haptic Architect, Arup Associates and architect Gudmund Stokke, a member of Nordic Office (NO) architectural consortium and the founder and CEO of NO who altogether undertake the architectural design of the project say that in the drawing of the project the focus will be on *“a business center and stores in the middle of the structure”*. According to the announcement on the company’s website, it is set forth that a commerce space with an aviation medical center and a big shopping mall in it will be constructed in the 1100-hectare area, while a 3500-hectare land will be used for the airport<sup>7</sup>. In fact, we are looking at a *“commerce and shopping center”* design that appears like an airport. Nordic Architecture team who gave a presentation at the World Architecture Festival (WAF) also declares a relation between the project and the city to be newly established in the region, while explaining the project: *“The project that composes of three terminal buildings and 6 runways opens up to the runways on the sea side while connecting to an airport city on the land side. In this new city to be established are hotels, food and beverage areas, shopping and commercial units<sup>8</sup>.”* All these first-hand statements verify the forecasts in the report of Bahçeşehir University Economic and Social Research Center (BETAM), which we quote below. The expectation is that the rest of the area, namely the remaining parts of it will be opened to construction projects and especially to commercially functioning projects. On the other hand, with the *“new city to be established”* that the Nordic team is talking about, there is no need to say then again that green lands, water basins and great divides will be further plundered and the population that will flow into the region as well as the traffic they will create will destroy the North Forests irreversibly. Thus

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<sup>6</sup> [http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/dosyalar/yeni-havalimanindan-ucan-ilk-yolcu-cevre\\_535636](http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/dosyalar/yeni-havalimanindan-ucan-ilk-yolcu-cevre_535636)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.diken.com.tr/9-soruda-ucuncu-havalimani-projesi/>

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.yapi.com.tr/haberler/tasarimcisi-3-havalimanini-anlatti\\_125285.html](http://www.yapi.com.tr/haberler/tasarimcisi-3-havalimanini-anlatti_125285.html)

the area is being handed on a silver platter to other future projects of the partners of the Consortium that is composed of construction firms.

The news that; a number of companies who had learned in advance that the area would turn into an attraction center with luxurious projects besides the airport, closed deals on a large amount of land in the region long before the announcement of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport Project, has now hit the fan. As for the villagers who cannot guess how much their fields will appreciate in value in the future; in this way, they have been deceived<sup>9</sup>.

Mr. Nihat Özdemir, Chairman of Limak Holding that is a partner in the Consortium who undertakes the project also stated that they would build up a city *“with a shopping mall the size of 5 stadiums and duty free and food and beverage areas,”* and added, *“We will not build merely an airport here, a city will be founded”<sup>10</sup>*. The fact that, in the tender made, an area of 53.000 square meters was allocated to the huge Duty Free section that will be the world’s biggest airport shopping center when completed is also an indicator of this<sup>11</sup>.

Additionally, he said that they would build an *“airport city”* for the airport employees whose total number will reach around 100.000, (the airport city mentioned in Nordic’s announcement must be this) and 6 touristic facilities/hotels with over 400 beds and also stated that İTO (Istanbul Chamber of Commerce) wanted a fairground of 500 thousand square meters<sup>12</sup> for itself too. The EIA report confirms this statement, as well. Under the title *“Airport Urban Complex”* (pg. 9) units such as sports center, museum and exhibition hall, conference center, cultural center, business center, mosque, church, synagogue, hospital and commercial areas are mentioned. So the project in front of us is far beyond an airport project and is an urban complex as it is named.

It is inevitable that this complex will trigger other constructional activities and give birth to infrastructural/transportation needs in the vicinity. As a matter of fact, in the *‘Real Estate Market Is Reshaping’* Report released by the Turkey division of the global company JLL who operates in the real estate services field, it is suggested that a Port-City will be founded neighboring the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport; it is also stated that upon the completion of 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport, 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge and North Marmara Highway projects, road and air transport to this city will increase<sup>13</sup>. Furthermore, the fact that the 3 million-population New Istanbul project is located near the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport has been stated firsthand by Michigan University, Faculty of Architecture Academician Roy Strickland with whom they are working to have him draw the same project behind closed doors<sup>14</sup>.

In accordance with the EIA reports and the views of the contractors mentioned above and based on media news, we can say that the true purpose here is to make the airport an attraction center and open the North Forests that are the life-blood of the city and that contain the most precious ecological systems to plunder projects, rather than to bring a solution to the transportation problem. 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport will trigger various development projects

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<sup>9</sup> <http://alisedarbolat.blogspot.com/2013/07/agac-katili-parti-akp-4-ulkerin.html>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.arcaajans.com/haber/ekonomi/3-havalimaniyla-ilgili-en-yeni-flas-beyanatlari/709729/>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.igairport.com/tr/haber.html>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/3-havalimaniyla-ilgili-flas/ekonomi/detay/2019340/default.htm>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.gazetevatan.com/dev-projelere-bolgeler-nasil-tepki-verecek--743757-ekonomi/>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ugkdtmz0afl>



within a vast field extending from Kemberburgaz to Hadımköy. In short, both local and global construction and real estate companies and architectural firms are greedily looking forward to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport's being turned into an attraction center and thus circumjacent lands' being opened to projects. The necessity for a third airport on the excuse of transportation, service, passenger traffic etc. is all verbiage, but the plunder of the last green land of Istanbul is the truth.

Bahçeşehir University Economic and Social Research Center (BETAM) 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport Report<sup>15</sup> that we quote in the section titled *"The Fate of the Airport Depends on Growth"* of our report reinforces this opinion of ours as well. To summarize, by putting "Aerotropolis" into practice, new cities will be established that are governed from the vicinage of the airport. Whether Istanbul's ecology, infrastructure or population of almost 20 million would carry this or not is no concern at all!

## 1.2. Mega Projects Package Program

If we continue with Mr. Özdemir's press briefing, *"The highway of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport will pass in front of us, there will come the linking roads and maybe even a link from the sea will be thought of. Maybe seaway transportation from Canal Istanbul will be able to be provided. This project will change the characteristic of Istanbul. Hopefully soon the tender for Canal Istanbul will be made too,"* he says; in this way, that these three mega projects are actually a package program and how each one feeds the other has been revealed. Also, on page 21 of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport EIA Report, on top of the projects for which fill material is to be provided is urban transformation and Canal Istanbul.

As it is also understood from the map below, the distance between the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport and the 2 cities that are planned to be established along Canal Istanbul as well as the areas to be opened to construction has diminished with Canal's outline being shifted to more East. Indeed, real estate consultants state that *"the positioning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport in this area and the North Marmara Highway route's passing by the Canal make the region an attraction center"*<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/fate-of-the-mega-airport-depends-on-growth.aspx?pageID=238&nID=50215&NewsCatID=396>

<http://betam.bahcesehir.edu.tr/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/ArastirmaNotu150.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.yapi.com.tr/haberler/kanal-istanbul-arsa-fiyatlarini-katladi\\_126203.html](http://www.yapi.com.tr/haberler/kanal-istanbul-arsa-fiyatlarini-katladi_126203.html)

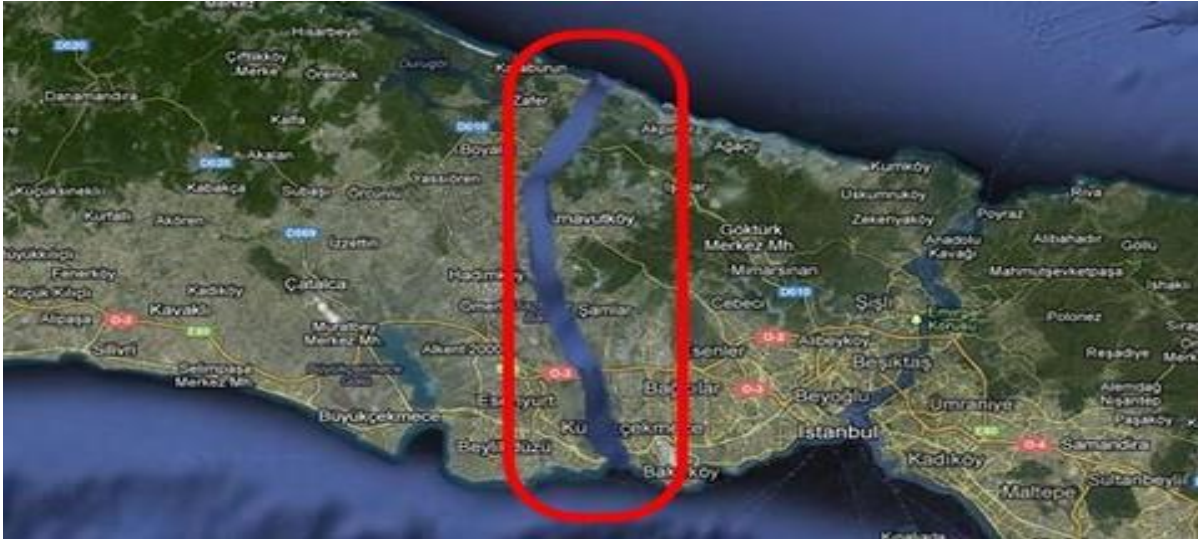


Figure 2. The location of the Canal and the distance between the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport and the new cities that will be situated around it.

As THY (Turkish Airlines) former Chairman Candan Karlıtekin has stated,

*“In fact, evaluating the new airport singly is an effort to look for a right answer to a wrong question. A correct analysis cannot be made without taking into account Canal Istanbul and the inhabiting around it, a new city to be founded in Northern-West Istanbul with a population of 2-3 millions, North Marmara Highway and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bosphorus Bridge together with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport. I am saying clearly; further enlarging and crowding Istanbul is a mistake in itself. While doing this, spreading Istanbul’s habitation to North, most particularly enlarging Istanbul on the European side is a complete strategic, political, economic, demographical and ecological mistake, which is also wrong in terms of climate and other environmental impacts. In no period in history have people used the North of Istanbul with the purpose of inhabiting. If you take these basic objections into consideration, then discussing a new airport will not even be necessary anymore... As you enlarge the European side, you will have to build new bridges and tube tunnels due to people and goods’ crossing to Anatolia. The additional time and cost for transportation that millions of passengers will spend also needs to be considered additionally<sup>17</sup>”.*

On the other hand, the first page of the EIA Report contains the horrifying clues of what kind of a future is envisaged for Istanbul with the Dubai vision ascribed to the city as well as the very surprisingly overtly announced “artificial paradise” definition: “Artificial paradises, floating cities and intelligent cities like those in Dubai await the mega urbanites who complain about the lack of green fields amongst skyscrapers. In parallel to this, the transportation systems and airports of mega cities are becoming different. And our country will of course receive its share of these differentiations.”

<sup>17</sup> [http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/dosyalar/yeni-havalimanindan-ucan-ilk-yolcu-cevre\\_535636](http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/dosyalar/yeni-havalimanindan-ucan-ilk-yolcu-cevre_535636)

The only share to be received of this state of play is Istanbul's being devastated cruelly! While the natural landscape of the city changes further each passing day through urban transformation projects and mega projects, its forests, meadows, agricultural lands, wetlands, basins and great divides are destroyed together with the endemic plants, birds and wild life in them, thus not only the rights of the citizens to live in a healthy and sustainable environment, but also the right to life itself which is the most untouchable right is violated. What awaits us as a result of the opening of the natural lands that need to be carefully protected for an ecologically and socially sustainable city to mega projects like 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge, 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport and Canal Istanbul that are controversial in every respect, with a top-down approach without taking into consideration the warnings of the scientists and occupational clusters is not the world city Istanbul, but the destruction project of Istanbul..

As a matter of fact, over the last couple of years, 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport, 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge and Canal Istanbul Projects located in the regions in the North of Istanbul where there are forest lands, water basins, great divides, shelter belts, wetlands, agricultural lands and meadows, do not fit into the planning system of Istanbul, are not in the *1/100.000 scaled Istanbul Environmental Plan that was approved on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2009, were brought to the top of the agenda with sudden decisions made by Prime Ministry without receiving opinions from relevant institutions and caused significant arguments between the investors and the experts on the subject as well as expert institutions<sup>18</sup>*.

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<sup>18</sup>TEMA Big Projects Report: Nuran Zeren Gülersoy. Esra Yazıcı Gökmen. Istanbul and the 3 Controversial Projects: 3. Bridge, 3. Airport and Canal Istanbul  
<http://www.tema.org.tr/folders/14966/categorial1docs/1244/BUYUKPROJELER20032014data.pdf> ; pg.12.

## 2. A GENERAL OUTLOOK ON THE AIRPORT PROJECT

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Istanbul Airport that is aimed to be one of the biggest airports in the world when completed and will take up a surface area of 76.500.000 square meters and is said to have a 150 million passenger capacity was put out to tender on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2013 by the Infrastructure Investments General Directorate of the Turkish Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications with a build-operate-transfer model. The highest amounted tender in the history of the Republic of Turkey, this was won by Cengiz - Kolin - Limak - MAPA - Kalyon Joint Undertaking Group with a 10 billion and 247 million Euro cost and 22 billion and 152 million Euro tender price and its authors as Grimshaw, Nordic Office of Architecture and Haptic Architects. In the project are a 1.301.128 m<sup>2</sup> terminal area, 4 terminal buildings, 165 passenger boarding bridges, 3 technical blocks and air traffic control towers, 8 control towers, 6 independent runways, 16 taxiways, an apron area of 6,5 million m<sup>2</sup> with 500 airplane capacity as well as auxiliary facilities such as a parking lot and a parking garage with a total of 70 thousand vehicle capacity, an aviation medical center, hotels, a fire station and a garage center, sanctuaries, a congress center, power plants, refining and garbage treatment plants<sup>19</sup>.

This project that is to be fulfilled with the Public Private Partnership (KÖİ) model harbors the drawbacks and inconveniences of this model too, as it will be explained in the section of our report on economy. The Public Private Partnership model that has been implemented since 2003, as an important tool in the hands of the government, has been carried way beyond the preferences that require high technology or that arise from the service's exceptional qualifications and started to be a mechanism of funds transfer to partisan capital groups. In addition, this model leads to that the budget deficit is seen low, the liabilities are extended to long term and the service costs increase and also makes it prevalent that the citizens pay a price in return for services<sup>20</sup>.

The project area bordering on the villages of Akpınar, İhsaniye, Odayeri, Baklalı, Zafer and Karaburun which are within the Arnavutköy and Eyüp districts of the European side is 7.650 hectares according to the EIA report (pages: 1, 35, 198, 264, 265) 6.172 hectares of which is forests. As for the rest, a 1.180-hectare part of this land is an area of utilization for mining and other uses while its 660 hectares (9%) include large and small lakes and ponds, its 236 hectares contain meadows, its 60 hectares contain dry (no-fallow) farming lands and 2 hectares contain heathlands. All these acreages mentioned do not yet include the area of impact of the project. When thought together with the impact area, it can be predicted that 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project will substantially demolish Istanbul's forests, basins and great divides. On page 134 of the first EIA report dated March 2013, following the statement *"The number of the trees within the area is 2.513.341, and its equivalent is 268.673,360 m<sup>3</sup>. The number of the trees in the area that have to be cut down is 657.950. 1.855.391 trees at the age of A and B in the area are movable,"* a note was made that, *"The work will be carried out in coordination with Istanbul Regional Directorate of Forestry, a work program will be constituted before the constructional phase and the trees to be cut down or moved will be*

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.dijimecmua.com/flash/index.php?id=10274&page=33> ;  
[http://www.csb.gov.tr/turkce/dosya/ced/Istanbul3\\_HavalimaniCEDRaporu\\_tum\\_mobil\\_2.pdf](http://www.csb.gov.tr/turkce/dosya/ced/Istanbul3_HavalimaniCEDRaporu_tum_mobil_2.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> CHP (The Republican People's Party) 2015 Central Administration Budget Draft Law Counter Vote Article Public Private Partnership Section . Appendix 1

*determined in cooperation. However, it is not possible to move all the trees in the area”!* At that rate, it is unclear how many trees will be able to be moved. As explained under the relevant title below, according to the experts, not only is this process not very feasible but also the transportation of the trees can in no way bring back an ecosystem that will be destroyed with its insects, birds, wildlife and endemic plants. The reason that we quoted from the 1st EIA report here is that, as detailed in the relevant section below, the number of the trees in the same parts of the report dated March 2014 has been removed (page: 198). According to the Chamber of Environmental Engineers, a total of around 2.5 million trees within the project area and the impact area will be destroyed<sup>21</sup> and thus Istanbul and its surroundings will lose its forests (therefore clean air) and water.

On page 64 of the EIA Report it is said that, *“The project area and the nature in its proximate environment has regained its natural quality as a result of the restorative work undertaken for the regain for mother nature of the fields that were ruined by mining activities over the years,”* thus, the definition “land without qualification” that the authorities put forth for the project area is refuted by the project’s own EIA Report. This is not an area without qualifications, on the contrary it is an area where natural life develops fast, life alive exists with its birds and insects and 81% of which is forests and 8.6% of which is composed of lakes and ponds. This area’s 236-hectare part is meadows and 60-hectare part is dry farming lands.

On page 61 of the EIA Report it is stated that, *“The natural ecosystem (forest lands, small and large water bodies that contain 70 living species, running and dry streams, agricultural lands, meadow lands) will be destroyed with the excavation work to be held in the area where the units within the scope of the project (runways, aprons, upper structures etc.) are planned to be constructed. This way, with the construction of the units, the natural vegetation and the natural quality of these areas will be destroyed”* and therefore it is accepted that the natural ecosystem accommodates 70 living species! What is interesting here is that the formations that were defined as ponds on page 27 as well as other relevant pages in the 1st EIA Report are qualified as water bodies in the relevant sections (pages: 61, 299 etc.) of the last two reports!

Besides all the jeopardies listed, again as stated in all of the EIA reports, 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport and other mega projects will lead to an increase in population, construction projects and industrialization in these areas. Thus, while the rest of the region will be opened to construction projects, water basins and great divides will be plundered and also surface waters will be contaminated. Such an enormous project’s being built in Istanbul’s northern region that is the city’s guarantee for environmental sustainability and where its natural richness lays means that the future of Istanbul is threatened.

Istanbul Environmental Plan scaled 1/100.000 that was accepted by Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (İBB) in 2009 is, due to these concerns, based on the principles that the functions that would attract population should not be allowed in the north of the city and the present ones should be removed from the city. As also stated by Mr. Çare Olgun Çalışkan, Board Member of The Chamber of City Planners of The Union of Chambers of

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<sup>21</sup> TMMOB Chamber of Environmental Engineers 3.Airport Technical Visit Report  
[http://www.cmo.org.tr/resimler/ekler/aeecfa3ef4a93cc\\_ek.pdf?tipi=78&turu=H&sube=2](http://www.cmo.org.tr/resimler/ekler/aeecfa3ef4a93cc_ek.pdf?tipi=78&turu=H&sube=2)

Turkish Engineers and Architects (TMMOB), with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport, quite the contrary, new constructions in this region will no longer be able to be prevented, because in this way the spread toward the north will further increase with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge route just passing by the immediate south of the area and the new city's residential areas that are planned in the north. Despite the Istanbul Environmental Plan that puts forth the fact that Istanbul can hold only a maximum of 16 million people so that its natural thresholds will not be exceeded anymore, it is predicted that this constructional structuring will increase the population of the city to over 20 million based on the most optimistic estimation. This means that the city will not be able to provide healthy and sustainable living conditions<sup>22</sup>.

Many reports including the EIA reports that we have quoted above have been published on 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport; in addition, scientists and professional chambers related to the subject have expressed their concerns and warnings as to the location selection of the airport. Lawsuits filed by professional chambers against the project also continue. If we enumerate some of the important captions from these scientific works and reports: It is pointed out that in an era of global warming when we need water most, Durusu (Terkos) being in the first place, important great divides and water basins as well as the last green lands in the north of Istanbul will be devastated and with the ecological nature of the region being destroyed the climate of the city will be affected negatively. That the local community who live off agriculture and stockbreeding for years will be aggrieved and the city will be deprived of a significant agricultural resource who serves it, as a result of the farming lands' and meadows' being sacrificed are among the warnings. The fact that the area hosts more than one million birds each year because it has been on the important migratory paths of the birds for centuries as well as the region's characteristic flora and fauna is emphasized in many reports including the 3<sup>rd</sup> EIA Report.

Additionally and very importantly, the area thought for the project will not only threaten the city's ecological and social sustainability, as we explain in the relevant section, it will also jeopardize the airworthiness because of both meteorological conditions peculiar to the area and the manmade soil. The severe conditions of the coasts of Black Sea particularly because of thick fog, high winds and icing, that the project area is on the birds' migration routes and the filler will not last due to the region's muddy soil and swampland ground, therefore the soil will slide are detailed in the TMMOB Chamber of Geological Engineers (JMO) 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport Report as we quote below. Moreover, TMMOB Istanbul Provincial Coordination Committee (İKK) notified in the technical report it published that the project's elevation's being decreased to 70 meters from 105 meters would make the airport inoperative because the simulations they had undertaken clearly demonstrated that according to international flight security criteria departing and landing from the land direction through runways to be built on a 70 meter elevation level would not be possible<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> <http://bianet.org/bianet/kent/142224-istanbulun-can-damarindan-ucaklar-gececek>

<sup>23</sup> TEPAV: [http://www.tepav.org.tr/upload/files/1368539971-1.Istanbul\\_Son\\_Agac\\_Havalimani\\_Istanbul\\_un\\_3\\_havalimani\\_hakkinda\\_bilmeniz\\_gerekenler.pdf](http://www.tepav.org.tr/upload/files/1368539971-1.Istanbul_Son_Agac_Havalimani_Istanbul_un_3_havalimani_hakkinda_bilmeniz_gerekenler.pdf)  
TEMA: <http://www.tema.org.tr/folders/14966/categorialdocs/1244/BUYUKPROJELER20032014data.pdf>  
BETAM: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/fate-of-the-mega-airport-depends-on-growth.aspx?pageID=238&nID=50215&NewsCatID=396> ; <http://betam.bahcesehir.edu.tr/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/ArastirmaNotu150.pdf>  
TMMOB Chamber of Geological Engineers:  
[http://www.jmo.org.tr/genel/bizden\\_detay.php?kod=7263&tipi=2&sube=6](http://www.jmo.org.tr/genel/bizden_detay.php?kod=7263&tipi=2&sube=6)



Besides all these, in the response that came from the Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications to the objections of Prof. Dr. Zerrin Bayrakdar about the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport, it is stated that the assessments on the project's location selection were made by Infrastructure Investments General Directorate of the Ministry within the framework of ICAO Annex-14 criteria by considering meteorological, topographical and navigational circumstances and the location was picked out of the alternative locations arising from the consideration of the mentioned criteria<sup>24</sup>. However, on page 29 of the EIA Report it is expressed that no alternative research was made for the selection of the location and it was acted upon the lowness of the expropriated price and the magnitude of this area against Atatürk Airport that falls short: *"...within the scope of the project intended to be implemented, the fact that the expropriated cost is quite low for a land with such a size and that Istanbul Atatürk Airport cannot meet the current traffic demand can be shown amongst other reasons why this area has been chosen. No assessment for alternative areas has been made by the Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications regarding the location selection within the scope of the project"*. That the lowness of the expropriated price is taken as an important criterion and the economic priority is accommodated means that the oxygen source of the city is to be destroyed, with a land 81% of which is forestlands being sacrificed. This contradiction clearly exhibits the efforts of the Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications to misdirect the public opinion in the details concerning this project.

As we explained roughly above, it is understood that an important part of the effort of the administration to open the north of Istanbul to rent projects is to intentionally mislead the public opinion. Even though it is tried to have both these threats awaiting Istanbul and the truth of rent seeking lying beneath the location selection of the project gone unnoticed, the following risks are stated under relevant titles in the EIA Report of the project itself: 1- Geological Situation 2-Geomorphological Situation 3-Hydrogeological Impact 4-Birds and migratory routes 5-Landslides (the impacts of shallow and deep landslides) 6-Plant Flora 7-Agriculture and Stockbreeding 8-Natural Resources (fossil fuels and coal mines), (clay, sand and aggregate pits) 9-Earthquakes and tectonic structure.

In the EIA reports that we have disclosed with details under relevant titles in our report, the following findings are stated as well. And yet, how right would it be to evaluate the report as positive?

- ...the project area has regained its natural quality as a result of the restorative work undertaken for the regain of mother nature of the fields that were ruined by mining activities
- ...72% of the project area is forests, 8% of it is lakes, 6% of it is meadows, heathlands and agricultural lands and 14% of it is mining fields... (According to the EIA reports

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TMMOB Chamber of Environmental Engineers: [http://politeknik.org.tr/sitew/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/CMO\\_istanbul\\_su\\_raporu.pdf?7b91f9&7b91f9](http://politeknik.org.tr/sitew/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/CMO_istanbul_su_raporu.pdf?7b91f9&7b91f9)

TMMOB Chamber of Environmental Engineers Istanbul Branch 3.Airport Area Technical Visit Report [http://www.cmo.org.tr/resimler/ekler/aecf3ef4a93cc\\_ek.pdf?tipi=78&turu=H&sube=2](http://www.cmo.org.tr/resimler/ekler/aecf3ef4a93cc_ek.pdf?tipi=78&turu=H&sube=2)

TMMOB İKK [http://politeknik.org.tr/sitew/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/3.havalimani\\_ikk\\_rapor\\_20141208.pdf?7b91f9](http://politeknik.org.tr/sitew/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/3.havalimani_ikk_rapor_20141208.pdf?7b91f9)

<sup>24</sup> See: Appendix 2

the acreage of the project area is 7.650 hectares in total, 6.172 hectares of which are forestlands. So the forests cover almost 81% of the entire area, not 72%)

- ...657.950 of the total 2.513.341 trees within the project area will be cut, as for the 1.855.391 trees that are movable, provided that the Regional Directorate of Forestry allows, the transportation of these trees will be carried out...
- ...the natural ecosystem (forest lands, lakes and ponds that contain 70 living species, running and dry streams, agricultural lands, meadow lands) will be destroyed with the excavation work to be held in the area... natural vegetation and natural characteristics of the area will be removed... lakes, small lakes and ponds will lose their wetland qualification and the life in them will end...
- ...decrease in water catchment amounts at Terkos Lake, Alibeyköy and Pirinççi Dams that supply an important amount of the drinking water need of Istanbul and increase in contamination loads with surface flows...
- ...due to an almost 120% increase in vehicular traffic stemming from the project on the main arterial roads in the region, it is expected that there will be an increase in the current pollution load of the region and with the destruction of the forestlands and the decline in the flow rates of the rivers that provide water for the dams in the region, there will be a decrease in the water levels of the dams...
- ...that the pollution will be carried into the dams along with the rivers will be in question too...
- ...the area is a field where many bird species live and carry out their vital activities and is on a route through which one of the bird migration paths goes... the construction of an airport in the region and the damage to be done on the wetlands and forests will threaten the lives of these bird species...
- ...in the case of the fulfillment of the project, there will be a huge habitat and biomass loss in floristic terms.

### 3. THE ECOSYSTEM VIS-A-VIS THE PROJECT



Figure 3. Panoramic view from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project area. Source: EIA Report pg. 36

Forests, heathlands, pasturages and meadows, agricultural lands and farms, wetlands and coastal sand dunes can be listed as terrestrial ecosystems and habitats that Istanbul has<sup>25</sup>. All of these lands will be harmed by either the direct impacts (during the constructional and operational phases of the projects) or the indirect impacts (new development areas and the population increase that the project will cause) of the mega projects that include 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport.

On the other hand, Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, Istanbul Provincial Directorate who will assess the EIA Report of the project forgets about the fact that the area is a basin of lakes and forests and states that it is not a natural asset or a protected area! Because the impacts of such an enormous sized project will be enormous too, it is another mystery why only one opinion was received from one institution. How right is it to receive opinion from one single institution in such kind of reports?

There are many important ecosystems in the north of the city that densely intertwine with forests or that neighbor forests. Among these, Terkos Basin and Ağaçlı sand dunes on the coast of Black Sea are within the impact area of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project. Because of such qualifications of the area where the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport is planned to construct, it appears to be a forestland and water basin in the Istanbul Environmental Plan scaled 1/100.000. This situation is expressed on page 196 of the EIA Report of the project in the following way: *“within a significant part of the area where the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport is intended to build are Arnavutköy North Forests”*. According to TMMOB Chamber of Environmental Engineers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project will impact the forests, the special pattern of the region and the ecosystems negatively, threaten the living creatures that offer the biological diversity and have damaging effects on known and unknown water reservoirs, the air quality and also the birds’ natural biotopes<sup>26</sup>.

Moreover, the construction of the airport in this area will not only demolish the ecological composition of the region but also cause Istanbul’s air, water and natural climate structure

<sup>25</sup> Sedat Kalem. The Impacts Of The Projects Planned in Istanbul On The Flora And Fauna; <http://www.tema.org.tr/folders/14966/categorial1docs/1244/BUYUKPROJELER20032014data.pdf> ; pg.31.

<sup>26</sup> [http://politeknik.org.tr/sitew/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/CMO\\_istanbul\\_su\\_raporu.pdf?7b91f9&7b91f9](http://politeknik.org.tr/sitew/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/CMO_istanbul_su_raporu.pdf?7b91f9&7b91f9)

to be destroyed, even to vanish. The statement “*Measures will be taken when encountered with inconveniencies*” in the EIA Report makes one think that it is not known what measure means and what is more, saying that “*For the areas whose natural structure has been ruined or ecological structure has been destroyed, measures will be taken afterwards*” is nothing but mocking human reason<sup>27</sup>.

Another one of the most important facts that the EIA reports set forth is that the project area composes of forests, lakes and meadows. Of the 7650-hectare area determined for the project, 6172 hectares (81%) are forestlands, 660 hectares (9%) are small and large lakes and ponds and 236 hectares (3%) are meadows. These three critical lands correspond to 90 percent of the area to be used for the airport. In other words, this special land 90% of which is lakes and forests at the outset of the project will have turned into a field 90% of which is concrete when the project materializes.

When the project’s indirect impacts and the total impact it will have together with the other projects are taken into account besides this calamitous picture, it is obvious that annihilation awaits Istanbul in the near future. Below we explain by title the irreversible impacts of this destruction project on the ecosystems and the ecocide that it will cause.

### 3.1. Forests / Green Lands



Figure 4. The increasing constructional development in Istanbul over the years (TMMOB Chamber of City Planners Istanbul Branch 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge Report)

Istanbul’s forests are one of the 200 important ecological regions in the world and one of the 100 forests that should be urgently protected in Europe. The forests that get denser toward the north of the city also contain important water resources. Because the North Forests are not very fragmented has made it easy for the wild life to develop here. Another important effect of these forests on the city is that they clean the air through the northern winds because they are in the north, which is the dominant wind direction of the city, and also

<sup>27</sup>TMMOB JMO Chamber of Geological Engineers - Istanbul Branch’s report on the location selected for the 3.Airport “3.Airport In Terms Of Environmental Geology ”; 10.10.2014.  
[http://www.jmo.org.tr/genel/bizden\\_detay.php?kod=7263&tipi=2&sube=6](http://www.jmo.org.tr/genel/bizden_detay.php?kod=7263&tipi=2&sube=6)

refresh and cool the city<sup>28</sup>. The destruction of the forests will mean the destruction of these vital effects on the city too.

This important area is surrounded by the Black Sea corridor in the north, Başakşehir – Sultanbeyli in the south, Sazlıbosna Farm and Arnavutköy center in the west and the Eyüp forest corridor of which it is a part in the east. Additionally and very importantly, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge transportation corridor passes through these forests and cuts the forestland into two in the direction of south and north. As stated on pages 264-66 of the EIA Report too, the total project area of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport is 7.650 hectares 6.172 hectares of which are constituted of a forestland of maritime pines, stone pines, Turkish pines, black pines, oaks, hornbeams, ash trees, limes, alders and cedar-type trees. There are many significant ecosystems that either intermingle with the forests or neighbor the forests in the north. Among these, Terkos Basin and Ağacli sand dunes on the coast of Black Sea are within the impact area of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project<sup>29</sup>.

Because of such qualifications, the area where the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport is planned to be constructed appears to be a forestland and water basin in the Istanbul Environmental Plan scaled 1/100.000. Therefore it is perilous that the EIA Report of the project forgets about the fact that the area is a basin of lakes and forests and states that there are no natural assets or protected areas in the region.

#### **Solution: Trees that cannot be moved!**

As stated on page 263 of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport EIA Report dated March 2014 *“Within an important part of the area where the airport is intended to build are the Arnavutköy North Forests which are the furthest west end of the Belgrat Forests”*. As for the EIA reports dated March 2013 (pg. 21) and April 2013 (pg. 36), this fact is stated with a stronger expression in those: *“A large part of the project area in question remains within the forestland according to the Environmental Plan”*.

In all of the three EIA reports, starting from the first page, the total acreage of the project area is given in square meters in some parts while the forestlands are given in hectares and in this way, a situation arises where a careless reader would consider the forestlands much less. So much so that, 3<sup>rd</sup> EIA pages 1 and 265 say that: *“The project area covers a total of 76.500.000 m2. According to the field usages of the project area, its 6.172-hectare part is forestlands.”*

Regarding the number of the trees, in the response that came to the petition of inquiry submitted by Prof. Zerrin Bayrakdar to AKP Communication Center on 19.06.2014 the number of trees here is stated as 1.855.391<sup>30</sup>. However in the Technical Visit Report of

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<sup>28</sup> Doğanay Tolunay. The Impacts of the Projects Planned in Istanbul on Forest Ecosystem and Endemic Species; <http://www.tema.org.tr/folders/14966/categorial1docs/1244/BUYUKPROJELER20032014data.pdf> pg:25 and TEPAV: [http://www.tepav.org.tr/upload/files/1368539971-1.Istanbul\\_Son\\_Agac\\_Havalimani\\_Istanbul\\_un\\_3\\_havalimani\\_hakkinda\\_bilmeniz\\_gerekenler.pdf](http://www.tepav.org.tr/upload/files/1368539971-1.Istanbul_Son_Agac_Havalimani_Istanbul_un_3_havalimani_hakkinda_bilmeniz_gerekenler.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> ibid pg. 25

<sup>30</sup> See: Appendix 1



TMMOB Chamber of Environmental Engineers, this number is given as 2.5 million with the ones to be cut in the impact area included.<sup>31</sup>

The number of the trees has been detailed in the 1<sup>st</sup> EIA Report (page: 134) dated March 2013:

*“In the area of activity, there are 389.393 trees corresponding to 41.619,106 m<sup>3</sup> within the borders of Çatalca Forestry Operation Directorate, Durusu Forest Sub-District Directorate, 908.834 trees corresponding to 57.776,698 m<sup>3</sup> within the borders of Istanbul Forestry Operation Directorate, Kemerburgaz Forest Sub-District Directorate and 1.214.468 trees corresponding to 169.277,556 m<sup>3</sup> within the borders of Istanbul Forestry Operation Directorate, Arnavutköy Forest Sub-District Directorate. The total number of the trees in the area is 2.513.341 corresponding to 268.673,360 m<sup>3</sup>”.*

The numbers of the trees in the 1<sup>st</sup> EIA Report have been removed from the respective parts of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> EIA Reports. The sentences that would coincide with the respective parts of the 1<sup>st</sup> report are missing in the last two reports. For example, the statements on page 173 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> report and on page 198 of the 3<sup>rd</sup> report are exactly as follows:

*“The area of activity is within the borders of Çatalca Forestry Operation Directorate, Durusu Forest Sub-District Directorate, Istanbul Forestry Operation Directorate, Kemerburgaz Forest Sub-District Directorate and Istanbul Forestry Operation Directorate, Arnavutköy Forest Sub-District Directorate. The area chosen for the project is 76.500.000 m<sup>2</sup> nearly 61.720.000 m<sup>2</sup> of which is forestlands.”*

On page 134 of the 1<sup>st</sup> EIA Report dated March 2013, it is stated that 657.950 of the 2.513.341 trees within the project area will be cut and 1.855.391 trees will be moved. These numbers somehow have not been included in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> EIA Reports! However, on page 197 of the 3<sup>rd</sup> EIA Report, it is expressed that young saplings are not included in the number of the trees to be cut. In this case, this number can be much bigger: *“The trees below 8 cm are not included in the number of trees to be cut and the asset calculation because they are not in the inventory”.*

On page 134 of the 1<sup>st</sup> EIA Report, the species of the trees and that some of them will be transported is stated, but it is suggested that not all of the trees will be able to be moved:

*“The number of the trees that have to be cut in the area is 657.950. On the other hand, 1.855.391 trees at the age of A and B within the area are in a movable state. The types of the trees are maritime pines, stone pines, Turkish pines, black pines, oaks, hornbeams, ash trees, limes, alders and cedars. Within the scope of the project, the work to cut some of the trees and to move and plant some of them in other areas will be carried out in coordination with Istanbul Regional Directorate of Forestry, a work program will be constituted before the constructional phase and the trees to be cut down or moved will be determined in cooperation. But it is not possible for all the trees in the area to be transported.”*

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<sup>31</sup> [http://www.cmo.org.tr/resimler/ekler/aeecfa3ef4a93cc\\_ek.pdf?tipi=78&turu=H&sube=2%20](http://www.cmo.org.tr/resimler/ekler/aeecfa3ef4a93cc_ek.pdf?tipi=78&turu=H&sube=2%20)



In the same paragraph of the other two reports, the transportation process is mentioned, but the statement *“But it is not possible for all the trees in the area to be transported”* in the 1<sup>st</sup> EIA Report has been removed from the 3<sup>rd</sup> EIA Report (pg. 198): *“The work regarding the trees within the area will be carried out in compliance with the regulations of the General Directorate of Forestry. In the case of the approval from the General Directorate of Forestry, necessary discussions will be had with the nearby municipalities, Arnavutköy and Eyüp municipalities being in the first place, and the tree demands of these municipalities being taken into consideration some of the trees in question will be transported at the project owner’s cost”*. We understand from these sentences that “some of the trees” will be moved, namely not all of the trees will. Such a sentence structure, which uses a positive auxiliary verb instead of a negative one is supposed to soften the seriousness of the situation.

In addition, it is also mentioned that some of these some of the trees will be brought to economy or put upon the market, which translates into cutting trees or wood chopping:

*“As some of the fast growing species such as pinus maritima, maritime pines and pinus radiata are difficult to be made use of in the Turkish market and do not have any landscape value, that it would be suitable for all their stands at every age to be cut and put on the market by the forest administration and also for the black pine and Turkish pine stands at the age of C with a 20-35,9 cm diameter to be cut and put on the market by the forest administration is being evaluated”* (pg. 198).

*“Species such as stone pine, locust, black pine, cedar, lime, alder and ash trees at the age of A that have landscape value as well as economic value should be considered for being planted in other areas or distributed to proximate municipalities or brought to economy within a certain plan”*<sup>32</sup>(pg. 198).

Moreover, according to the views of the experts, the transportation of the trees is inconvenient, even impossible in every angle<sup>33</sup>. An academician at Istanbul University, Faculty of Forestry, Prof. Dr. Sedat Ayanoğlu too underlines that it is not technically possible to move this many trees and it requires a very long procedure to move the trees with a height above 8 m. Ayanoğlu, who claims that legal procedures are skipped in the project in order to avoid lawsuits, states that the airport and the accompanying projects will make Istanbul uninhabitable, let alone the loss of natural resources<sup>34</sup>. In this way, the project area will be practically cleared of trees!

When the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project is considered together with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge, the total acreage of the forests to be directly cut down for the link roads of both projects is 8.215 hectares, which equals to nearly 8.000 football fields. Mega projects will also pioneer the transformation of the region into new usage areas; therefore much more of the Istanbul forests will be damaged. There will be a decrease in the benefits (firewood production, water production, climate regulation, carbon bonding and oxygen production, diminishing air pollution, being a habitat for living creatures etc.) that the forests provide too. When the projects’ indirect impacts are taken into account, the picture we face is much scarier.

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<sup>32</sup> Any sentence fragments and spelling errors in the quotes are directly from the EIA Report.

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.tepav.org.tr/upload/files/1368539971->

[1.Istanbul Son Agac Havalimani Istanbul un 3. havalimani hakkinda bilmeniz gerekenler .pdf](#)

<sup>34</sup> [http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/dosyalar/yeni-havalimanindan-ucan-ilk-yolcu-cevre\\_535636](http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/dosyalar/yeni-havalimanindan-ucan-ilk-yolcu-cevre_535636)

## The Area of Mines Diversion

According to the Istanbul Environmental Plan dated 2009 and scaled 1/100.000 that was prepared by experts and is the Constitution of Istanbul, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport area is a forestland and a water basin. A perception management is being performed to make believe that the airport will be built in the area where the old mines are, not in the forestland, and therefore will not harm the environment very much.

However, mining activities are only temporary usages of the fields; a field is allocated for a certain period for the mining activity and it is required that the field be restituted and left in its initial condition as per the regulations. If a mining field has been opened in a forestland, that field is not taken off the borders of the forestland, but is requested to be afforested and then returned to the respective forest management at the end of the mining activity in question. Therefore, the areas shown as mining or other usage fields should in fact be qualified as forestlands or agricultural lands<sup>35</sup>. As a matter of fact, this view has been verified in the respective pages of the earlier EIA reports and on page 64 of the 3<sup>rd</sup> EIA Report: *“The nature in and around the project area has regained its natural quality as a result of the restorative work undertaken for the regain of mother nature of the fields that were ruined by mining activities over the years”*.

The field that is described in the following sentence on page 197 of the 3<sup>rd</sup> EIA Report, *“Most of the area of activity is an afforestation field”* should be the forestlands that are being constituted following the evacuation of the mines. However, if there is not an equivocation here, the fact that “most of the area” is forestlands must have been forgotten. In this case, the sentence on page 263 of the same report, *“Within an important part of the area where the airport is intended to build are the Arnavutköy North Forests which are the furthest west end of the Belgrat Forests”* refutes itself.

Besides the 3<sup>rd</sup> EIA Report, as we quoted above, on pages 36 of the 1. EIA Report dated March 2013 and the 2. EIA Report dated April 2013 it is said that *“A large part of the project area in question remains within the forestland according to the Environmental Plan”* and what the authorities say has been refuted by the project’s own EIA reports. This is not an area without qualifications, on the contrary it is an area where natural life develops fast, life alive exists with its birds and insects and 81% of which is forests and 8.6% of which is composed of lakes and ponds. This area’s 236-hectare part is meadows and 60-hectare part is dry farming lands. Therefore, highlighting the parts where mining activities are carried out in the airport project area a larger part of which remains within the forestlands and presenting it as if it were an area without qualifications is nothing but building legitimacy for the destruction project! If it is taken into consideration that the fields where mining activities have been performed can be regained as forestlands, the forestland area in the project is calculated much higher.

As stated on page 35 of the 1. EIA Report, *“The natural ecosystem (forest lands, lakes and ponds that contain 70 living species, running and dry streams, agricultural lands, meadow lands) will be destroyed with the excavation work to be held in the area where the units*

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<sup>35</sup> Nuran Zeren Gülersoy. Esra Yazıcı Gökmen. Istanbul and the 3 Controversial Projects: 3.Bridge, 3.Airport and and Canal Istanbul; ibid pg:19.

*within the scope of the project (runways, aprons, upper structures etc.) are planned to be constructed. This way, with the construction of the units, the natural vegetation and the natural quality of these areas will be destroyed”* (There is the same paragraph with the same words on page 61 of the 3<sup>rd</sup> EIA Report; however the ponds and lakes have been changed as “small and large water bodies”!).

As warned by TMMOB Chamber of Environmental Engineers, *“This is an area which unguided and haphazard urbanization has not yet reached and is the lungs and carbon sinks of the city; it is the only place in Istanbul where the region’s biological diversity and ecological balance is trying to survive. This region is the last one that has stayed alive and that keeps Istanbul alive. Therefore it is a ‘forestland that needs to be protected’ as required by Forestry Law<sup>36</sup>”*.



Figure 5. The Rivers and Lakes within the Vicinity of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport Project Area - Source: EIA Report pg. 60.

### 3.2. Water Basins

660 hectares of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project area compose of lakes and ponds and this amount does not yet include the impact area. When the impact area of the project is taken into consideration too, we can predict that Istanbul’s water assets will be destroyed incalculably. When the impacts of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge projects are calculated together, these projects will increase the housing and construction in the north of Istanbul, thus bring the drinking water resources on the European side to an end and irreversibly destroy the last virgin areas that are the breath of Istanbul.

As stated on page 281 of the EIA Report, due to the fast and unplanned urbanization, water basins have been significantly affected especially during recent years and the basins under the invasion of housing and industrial areas have been seriously devastated. On the other hand, the Basins of Terkos and Darlık, which are further from the city, have been better

<sup>36</sup><http://bianet.org/bianet/kent/142224-istanbulun-can-damarindan-ucaklar-gececek>

protected as compared with others. Terkos Lake with its water potential has 22% of the fresh water reservoirs within the vicinity of Istanbul. It provides a significant part of the city water. The lake also functions as a reservoir for the waters coming from the streams of Istranca and is the biggest wetland area of the city on the European side.

The importance of Terkos Dam Lake for the city is detailed on page 76 of the 1. EIA and on page 126 of the 3<sup>rd</sup> EIA:

*“Terkos Dam Lake, the coastline and the forestland in its vicinity (forests, heathlands, wetlands, sand dunes and rocky areas) is one of our plant areas that have an international importance in terms of fresh water and sand ecosystem. This area in Istanbul that qualifies as sand dune and water flora has been taken under protection via international conventions because it has a rich flora and rare plant species on both a global and domestic scale (DHKD, 2000). Additionally, the area is the largest sand dunes land in the Black Sea Region and an area of 2102 hectares has been afforested with Istanbul-Çatalca Terkos Durusu Sand Dune Project by the General Directorate of Erosion Control and Afforestation in order for it not to fill Terkos Dam Lake (Tüfekçi et al., 2006). By the lakeshore of the Terkos Dam Lake and in its water resources there are extremely rare plant species and biotopes. In the scope of the Bern Convention, the area is also a field of migration, reproduction and living for the birds and the lake area has an important habitat in terms of both wildlife and amphibians (DHKD, 2000)”.*

However, the future of Terkos Lake is under threat because the streams that remain within the borders of the project area and feed Terkos Dam and Alibeyköy Dam will be imperiled due to the construction. As a matter of fact, it is stated on page 279 of the 3<sup>rd</sup> EIA Report too that the streambeds within the area will be demolished. On page 284 of the report, the serious impacts of the project on Terkos Lake are listed as well: *“The linking of the 2 streams that feed Terkos Lake basin whose catchment area is 736,2 km<sup>2</sup> and water area is 39 km<sup>2</sup> will be severed as a result of the construction work planned to be done. As a result of the destruction of the streams in question, there will be a decrease in the catchment level of the dam and an increase in the pollution loads with surface flows. The Ceko Stream, the stream named Üstülük in its continuation and a part of Yeniköy Stream that together feed Terkos Lake basin will all be devastated. Within this framework, it is seen that the routes of the stream flows of Terkos will be affected by this and its water potential will diminish”.*

According to the EIA Report, the planned operational capacity of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport is 150 million passengers annually and its daily passenger capacity has been calculated as nearly 411.000 (pg. 18). It is predicted that nearly 2.000 medium commercial vehicles and nearly 1.000 cars will come and go to the airport. If we continue from the page 281 of the EIA Report, in this case, *“Because of a 120% increase in traffic in the main arterial roads in the area, which will stem from the project, it is expected that the current pollution load of the area will increase, the forestlands will be destroyed and the water levels at the dams will decrease due to the decrease in the flow rates of the streams that provide dams with water.”*

Another perilous development that the report draws attention to is the pollution in the dams: *“That the pollution predicted to mix in the streams providing water for the dams will be carried into the dams will be in question as well”* (pg. 281). In addition, during the construction phase of the project, the dust and exhaust gas emissions arising from the constructing and excavating activities will also have a negative impact on the lake.

Despite such a perilous picture, there is no data in the EIA Report as to what the extent of the pollution to be created by this density to occur in the drinking water basins will be or how much decrease will be caused in the drinking water resource capacity by m<sup>3</sup> annually, as well as about the change in the pollution profile of the water quality. Only the current pollution figures are given and it is stated that the state of affairs will be followed: *“The project area’s west boundary Terkos Dam and south boundary Alibeyköy Dam are within the far range protection zone. About the matter, collaborated work will be carried out with İSKİ (Istanbul Directorate of Water and Sewerage Services) and DSİ (State Hydraulic Works) 14. Regional Directorate and the necessary permissions and precautions will be taken”* (pg. 284).

### 3.3. Wetlands

New wetlands and ecosystems have been formed as a result of the fact that the mine craters of the abandoned mining operations within the project area have been filled with water in time (because the soil’s saturation ratio is very high). According to the 1<sup>st</sup> EIA Report, there are 70 lakes, small lakes and ponds in the area. As for the 3<sup>rd</sup> EIA Report; these have been described as small and large water bodies in this report! According to the 1<sup>st</sup> EIA Report, the project will use the lake and pond waters as utility water and irrigation water during the construction phase, and then these lakes and ponds will be filled with excavation and filling materials. On pages 48 and 279 of the 3<sup>rd</sup> EIA Report, *“lake and pond waters”* are defined as *“small and large temporary water bodies”* and then as *“artificial water holes”*. But, no matter how they are described, it is clearly expressed that these will lose their qualification as wetlands and 70 aquatic lives and living species will disappear.



Figure 6. Ponds Formed with Mine Craters Being Filled with Water and Plant Species (TMMOB ÇMO (Chamber of Environmental Engineers) Istanbul Branch Technical Visit Report pg. 3)

According to the TMMOB ÇMO Istanbul Branch Technical Visit Report, *“...New wetlands have been formed as a result of the fact that mine craters have been filled with water (because the soil’s saturation ratio is very high) which created new ecosystems in the region and lead to the regain of the liveliness that had been destroyed by mining activities. Within the same vicinity, are there also natural lakes that can be distinguished by the abundance and prevalence of the reeds<sup>37</sup>”* (pg. 3). If we continue from the same report: *“It has been observed that there are fish species such as cranes, carps, catfish and mirror carps in the*

<sup>37</sup> [http://www.cmo.org.tr/resimler/ekler/aeecfa3ef4a93cc\\_ek.pdf?tipi=78&turu=H&sube=2%20](http://www.cmo.org.tr/resimler/ekler/aeecfa3ef4a93cc_ek.pdf?tipi=78&turu=H&sube=2%20); pg. 3.

*ponds of these wetlands. Especially the cranes are an important species that can be seen rather rarely as compared with others and they can be found in these ponds. In addition, it has been observed that there are sea florals of various types within the ponds” (pg. 3). That being the case, 3<sup>rd</sup> EIA cannot explain the miracle of “fish species such as cranes, carps, catfish and mirror carps” living in these “temporary water bodies”!*

According to the ÇMO Istanbul Branch Technical Visit Report, underground water resources that feed the dams will be negatively affected as well: *“Many drilling activities observed in the area, the water cornet of the surface area, the observable saturation ratio of the craters and the information received from the meetings held taken into account, it has been reported that fresh water was found after 20 m through the drillings performed up to nearly 70 m and as the drilling continues, the water cornet continues too. This situation in the area shows that the underground water resources will be damaged. These water resources that are in a very close area to Terkos Basin are the possible water resources that feed the basin. Therefore, it is also a topic in question that the water cornet and amount of the Basins will be affected<sup>38</sup>” (pg. 6).*

## **Drought**

The studies on regional precipitation change and changeability performed by various researchers in the last 20 years have revealed that the sudden decrease in the precipitation in the large Sahara Region of Africa and in the subtropical belt that started in 1960s began to be influential within the Eastern Mediterranean Basin and Turkey since 1970s. Aegean, Mediterranean, Marmara and South-Eastern Anatolia Regions were affected most by the droughty conditions between early 1970s and early 1990s. Therefore, the results of the studies performed on both Eastern Mediterranean Basin and Turkey show that there is a general decrease in precipitation, especially growing stronger after 1970s, and droughty conditions in these regions gradually increase their impact<sup>39</sup>.

As a result of the long-continued meteorological droughts stemming from the precipitation levels far below the average, which arose in these years, Turkey has gone through agricultural and hydrologic droughts. It has been observed that this water shortage and deficit that prevails in some parts of Turkey has reached a critical point in terms of not only agriculture and energy production but also water management that includes irrigation, drinking water and other hydrologic systems and activities<sup>40</sup>.

Based on these scientific studies and data, one the most important problems that await both Istanbul and Turkey within the next years is drought. This being the case, while the governments should take urgent precautions, the mega projects including the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport aimed at North Forests will lead to the concretion of all the catchment basins in Marmara Region and also accelerate the precipitations’ mixing into the sea through the sewage. In short, let alone taking precautions against drought and water shortage, these projects will on the contrary speed up the drought and water shortage.

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<sup>38</sup> [http://www.cmo.org.tr/resimler/ekler/aeecfa3ef4a93cc\\_ek.pdf?tipi=78&turu=H&sube=2](http://www.cmo.org.tr/resimler/ekler/aeecfa3ef4a93cc_ek.pdf?tipi=78&turu=H&sube=2) ; pg. 6.

<sup>39</sup> Murat Türkeş. Telat Koç. Faize Sarış. Turkey’s Precipitation Total and Density - Time-wise and Areal Analysis of the Changes and Trends in Its Sequences; *Geographical Sciences Magazine*, 2007, 5 (1), pg. 57-73.

<sup>40</sup> *ibid*



There are two points here that should not be forgotten. First, as entire Turkey is in a drought period, water shortage and drought in the nearby cities and regions with water resources that carry water to Istanbul will be a serious threat in coming years as well. Secondly, the process of seawater distillation that is thought to be a possible solution requires too much energy and is not a solution for drought in the densely populated areas.

This being the case, the destruction of the water basins and underground resources that we have to protect at all costs for a sustainable city and ecology is simply unexplainable. As a matter of fact, as also quoted above, it has been clearly expressed in the EIA Report that the destruction of the wetlands will negatively impact the Terkos Basin ecological corridor and then the ecological corridors of the other basins linking to this<sup>41</sup>.

### **Kulakçayırı Lake with Its Historical and Ecological Value**

Within the project area is the Kulakçayırı Lake, one of the rare lakes that has been able to preserve its natural state within the province of Istanbul<sup>42</sup>. Being an important biotope for migratory birds, this lake is required to be treated within the scope of “Wetlands Protection Regulation” and necessary action should be taken accordingly, when as the regulation has been breached<sup>43</sup>. It is obligatory that the wetlands not be dirtied and their natural structure and ecological character be protected. In every kind of water and land use planning, it is pursued that the function and value of the wetlands be protected. The protection and enhancement of the population of the aquatic birds in wetlands is shown great care to. Nevertheless, the spatial interference envisaged in the relevant plans is such as to pose a threat for the wetlands, Kulakçayırı being in the first place.

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<sup>41</sup> TMMOB ÇMO Technical Visit Report :

[http://www.cmo.org.tr/resimler/ekler/aeecfa3ef4a93cc\\_ek.pdf?tipi=78&turu=H&sube=2](http://www.cmo.org.tr/resimler/ekler/aeecfa3ef4a93cc_ek.pdf?tipi=78&turu=H&sube=2) ; pg. 4

<sup>42</sup> Satellite Image of 3. Airport and Kulakçayırı:

[http://www.turkcebilgi.com/harita/kulak%C3%A7ay%C4%B1r%C4%B1\\_g%C3%B6l%C3%BC](http://www.turkcebilgi.com/harita/kulak%C3%A7ay%C4%B1r%C4%B1_g%C3%B6l%C3%BC)

For the pressure put on the villagers just before the destruction of Kulakçayırı:

<http://www.kuzeyormanlari.org/2014/08/26/yenikoy-kuzey-ormanlarinda-bugun-bir-mese-daha-kesildi/>

<sup>43</sup> Wetland definition according to the regulation is: “Swamplands, reeds, turbaries and all waters, natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, whose waters are flowing or stagnant, fresh, hard or salty, that contain depths not exceeding six meters during the reflux phase of the sea tides, that have importance as a habitat for living creatures aquatic birds being in the first place, and any areas that ecologically remain as wetlands toward the landside beginning from the shore edge lines of these areas”. Land cannot be reclaimed via filling or drying wetlands. In the case of any land reclamation in defiance of this provision, the area in question is to be rehabilitated by the performer of the activity.



Figure 7. Kulakçayırı Lake and the oak forest that have been destroyed.

The importance of Kulakçayırı is expressed both in the 1.EIA Report (pg. 137) and the 3<sup>rd</sup> EIA Report (pg. 202) as well: *“Kulakçayırı Lake which remains within the project area is in a very important location for the region, in terms of both its historical and ecological value. Kulakçayırı Lake is quite rich in terms of fish variety as well.”* Despite this determination, as expressed in the EIA reports, the project will use the waters of these artificial lakes, small lakes and ponds including Kulakçayırı as utility water and irrigation water during the construction phase, and then *“ These lakes and ponds will be filled with excavation and filling materials. Therefore they will lose their wetland qualifications. These areas as well as the aquatic life and living species in and around them will disappear”*. 3<sup>rd</sup> EIA says *“temporary water bodies”* instead of *“lakes, small lakes and ponds”* Whereas most of these small lakes are fishing zones that contain especially carps and basses.

A news piece published on fishing websites about Kulakçayırı:

*“DEAR FISHERMEN, I get about many lakes of Istanbul; after I get done with notched fishing rod I go hunting crane and bass with spinners. A friend of mine took me to a beautiful lake, KULAKÇAYIRI, and since then each time I have gone there I have caught many basses and cranes; it has never sent me back empty-handed. But now this lake is getting closed down FOR THE AIRPORT CONSTRUCTION, all of its roads have been shut down, there is no access to it in any way and every day hundreds of trucks pour excavation here and fill the lake. ALL THE FISH WILL DIE. I sent e-mails to many web sites and relevant institutions including Greenpeace and Ministry of Environment. I haven't been able to win through yet. Considering that you are a sensitive group I want you to help on this, the fish can be moved, tons of water can be Istanbul's water demand. PLEASE HELP OUR NATURE.”<sup>44</sup>*

As documented in photos above (figures 7-8) taken during the technical visit to the region by Northern Forests Defense (KOS) on 2 March 2015, the lake is being filled and the oak trees around it are being destroyed.

In another piece of news from excursion websites, Kulakçayırı is depicted as follows:

*“Given the cold weather, day trips and excursions are preferred during the weekends rather than long trips. So when the desires to enjoy the nature and to go fishing as a hobby came together, we opened our eyes at Kulakçayırı Lake, without getting too far away from Istanbul. I wanted to present it as an alternative place to see in cold weather without stretching too far. There are so many natural beauties in the Arnavutköy region and they are too numerous to be counted or gone about. About one of these, Kulakçayırı, the pictures already tell most of the things to be told. The view where the lake and the forest merge gives off such a pleasant scene. But I couldn't photograph this amazing view, because we had to leave the the vehicle on the top and walk down and left all the excess things in the vehicle”<sup>45</sup>*.

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<sup>44</sup> <http://www.baliksevdam.com/konu/baliklari-kurtaralim.13839/>

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.gezenbilir.com/index.php?topic=64392.0>

In the recent years, the ecosystem has repaired an area which was destructed by the miners. Such a recreational area right next to the big city is a blessing for the urbanites. According to Nature Association (the Turkish Partner of BirdLife International), Science Coordinator and bird observer Süreyya İsfendiyaroğlu too, the field could have been neatened and opened to Istanbul people. With the recreational areas and fields to be arranged for organic productions, the city could embrace the nature. The region could have been turned into a breathing space for Istanbulites who live in a concrete jungle<sup>46</sup>.

### 3.4. The Impacts on the Climate-Heat Island-Air Pollution

We can talk about two angles of the climate changes within the impact area of the mega projects including the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport: 1) Global Climate Change may lead to a regional climate change in the Istanbul vicinity. 2) The potentials of the new field usage types (water canal, airport, new and more extra housing, industry, roads, concrete areas etc.) arising from the projects in question to change the regional climate (Türkeş and Sümer, 2004; Türkeş and friends, 2005)<sup>47</sup>.

*“Even though their sizes differ, usually all cities and areas that become urbanized (where concretion and building density increase) exhibit the characteristics of an urban heat island. As a result of this, we see that along long term heat waves the heat stress intensifies and thunder squalls, thunder storms, hail storms and in parallel, urban floods and overflows occur more often and more severely (the degree of exposure-vulnerability to disasters increase) <sup>48</sup>”.*

As a matter of fact, the fact that each rainfall turns into a flood disaster is a consequence of Istanbul’s excessive and unplanned urbanization. As the mega projects including the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport will increase concretion and density, it is not wrong to say that Istanbul will be more frequently exposed to unfavorable weather conditions mentioned above.

Istanbul who will lose its Northern Forests will thus not only be deprived of the clean air and coolness that come with the winds blowing from the north but also it can be expected that the winds coming from the north, on the contrary, will now pollute the air of the city. We can say that we will be facing multiplied amounts of air pollution because during the days when the Northeaster that is one of the two main winds of the city blows, the gas emissions of the airplanes will spill over the city via this wind. The emissions diffusing from the airplanes will spread all over the southern region of the city and especially Bakırköy district and its vicinity<sup>49</sup>. Besides that, when the pollution and the exhaust fumes to spill over the city from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge which would qualify as a giant 10 lane highway rather than a bridge are taken into account, let alone the right to live in a healthy environment, people’s right to life will have been breached.

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<sup>46</sup> [http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/dosyalar/yeni-havalimanindan-ucan-ilk-yolcu-cevre\\_535636](http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/dosyalar/yeni-havalimanindan-ucan-ilk-yolcu-cevre_535636)

<sup>47</sup> Murat Türkeş. The Impacts of the Projects Planned to Be Constructed in Istanbul on Local Climate and Climate Change;

<http://www.tema.org.tr/folders/14966/categorial1docs/1244/BUYUKPROJELER20032014data.pdf>

pg: 67.

<sup>48</sup> ibid pg:74.

<sup>49</sup> Interview with Mikdat Kadioğlu. Kentin Tozu (The Dust of the City) program on Açık Radio 24 May 2013: <http://archive.org/download/KentinTozu24Mayis2013/KentinTozu20130524.mp3>



### 3.5. Flora and Fauna

#### Flora and Endemic Plants

If we quote from the page 126 of the EIA Report, *“Terkos Dam Lake and the forestland around it and the coastline (forest, heathland, wetland, sand and rock fields) is one of our plant areas that have an international importance in terms of fresh water and sand ecosystem. This region in Istanbul that has a quality of sand dunes and water flora has been taken under protection by international conventions because it has a rich flora and rare plant species in both domestic and international scales (DHKD; 2000). On the shores of the Terkos Dam Lake and in its water resources, there are extremely rare plant species and biotopes”*.

Mr. Sedat Kalem, who describes the region as one of the places in Turkey that have the richest flora with its 575 plant taxons in the relevant section of the TEMA Report, details the importance of the region as follows: *“In its flora, 10 plant species are in danger according the Bern Convention (Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats) and 8 plant species are in danger in the global scale and more than 23 plant species are rare plant taxons countrywide. 13 of these are endemic. This region where the examples of sand dunes, meadows, forests and wetland plant communities that are peculiar to Europe are exhibited is a unique one that contains a mixture of the most important natural habitats in Trakya<sup>50</sup>”*.

On the other hand, Kalem also states that the specific vegetation of the Terkos sand dunes still maintains its extraordinary importance and its flora, amongst other sand dune systems in the Blacksea coasts, has the maximum number of countrywide rare plant taxons<sup>51</sup>. According to the Appendix 18 of the EIA Report, *“in the case of the realization of the project, there will be a huge loss of habitat and biomass in floristic terms”*. In the Ecological Assessment Report prepared by Ankara University, Science Faculty, Biology Department academician Prof. Dr. Latif Kurt, there is detailed information on flora and fauna while it is repeated that *“there will be an enormous loss of habitat and biomass”* with the project; in addition, it is stated here that it is very important that the region be examined in terms of hydrobiology and ornithology (science of birds).

Even though the EIA Report (pg. 269) states that these plants can be transported and the seeds of those that are in danger must be definitely collected, the EIA is after all a report that was written on the table over a literature review without going down to the field. Therefore, it is vague whether these plants will be able to be transported or not just like the case with the trees. Besides, time is needed for such protection methods, because the plantation on the plants has to be done first and then filling and splitting procedures should follow<sup>52</sup>. In the same way, the vegetable soil within the project activity area will be removed too. Although it is stated on page 268 of the EIA Report that this soil will be collected in storage areas, this too is a very expensive, inconvenient and unclear procedure.

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<sup>50</sup> Sedat Kalem. The Impacts of the Projects Planned to Be Constructed in Istanbul on Flora and Fauna. <http://www.tema.org.tr/folders/14966/categorial1docs/1244/BUYUKPROJELER20032014data.pdf> ; pg:33

<sup>51</sup> *ibid*; pg:35

<sup>52</sup> [http://www.tepav.org.tr/upload/files/1368539971-1.Istanbul\\_Son\\_Agac\\_Havalimani\\_Istanbul\\_un\\_3.havalimani\\_hakkinda\\_bilmeniz\\_gerekenler\\_.pdf](http://www.tepav.org.tr/upload/files/1368539971-1.Istanbul_Son_Agac_Havalimani_Istanbul_un_3.havalimani_hakkinda_bilmeniz_gerekenler_.pdf)

## Fauna and Wild Life

The large Terkos Basin that includes Terkos Lake, besides being an Important Plant Area, is one of the last-standing natural lands of Istanbul in terms of biological variety with its fauna species (birds, mammals, reptiles, etc.) and its natural biotopes (habitats) that give these species shelter. It is also one of the 305 important Natural Lands that have been determined by the Nature Association. However, this area will be affected directly and negatively by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project<sup>53</sup>. The Science Coordinator of the Nature Association and a bird observer, Süreyya İsfendiyaroğlu, indicates that between the Belgrat Forests in the north of Istanbul and Bulgaria, living creatures such as catamounts, deers and wolverines try to survive<sup>54</sup>.

When the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge and the areas of impact are taken into account, it can be suggested that the right of the fauna species to life will be destroyed. Many living species whose lives will be in danger because of the project are detailed in the TEMA Report; among these<sup>55</sup>, the otter seen around the Motor Stream is an endangered species and one of the *“fauna types that definitely have to be protected”* according to the Appendix II list of the Bern Convention (Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats)<sup>56</sup>.

3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project, together with the other mega projects, will negatively affect the wildlife here too. Because the forestlands on both sides of Istanbul are not very fragmented, they are very important for wildlife. Mega projects will lead to the fragmentation of the habitats of the wildlife both with link roads and by increasing housing and construction here. As a result of the habitat fragmentation, the animals will be forced to live in smaller areas and in that case, it will be difficult for them to feed or reach the water, additionally there will be a possibility of genetic disorders stemming from their reproduction in small groups<sup>57</sup>. Another consequence of the habitat fragmentations is that, as we often witness recently, feral pigs that lose their way jump into the Bosphorus and swim across the other shore<sup>58</sup> or come down to the central areas of the city such as Tarabya, Bebek, Tophane, Sarıyer or make land at the coasts of these areas<sup>59</sup>. The EIA Report lists among the precautions to be taken the moving fauna elements within the project area should be disturbed and forced to migrate from the region before the constructional phase (pg. 270). Because there has been left no living space for the animals that were made run away from the project field which is in the same area as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge, it looks like the question that if they will come down to the city as we see in the feral pigs case never occurred to the minds of those who prepared the report!

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<sup>53</sup> Sedat Kalem. The Impacts of the Projects Planned to Be Constructed in Istanbul on Flora and Fauna; <http://www.tema.org.tr/folders/14966/categorial1docs/1244/BUYUKPROJELER20032014data.pdf> pg:38

<sup>54</sup> [http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/dosyalar/yeni-havalimanindan-ucan-ilk-yolcu-cevre\\_535636](http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/dosyalar/yeni-havalimanindan-ucan-ilk-yolcu-cevre_535636)

<sup>55</sup> TEMA Report - detailed on pg. 24-42.

<sup>56</sup> ibid pg: 38-39.

<sup>57</sup> ibid pg: 41

<sup>58</sup> <http://blog.radikal.com.tr/cevre/ucuncu-kopruden-kacan-domuz-yavrulari-41117>

<http://www.vidivodo.com/video/10-domuz-bogazi-yuzerek-gecti-showhaber/1125426>

<https://www.facebook.com/video.php?v=10151744942102585&set=vb.785622584&type=2&theater>

<sup>59</sup> <http://haber.sol.org.tr/kent-gundemleri/ormanlari-talan-edilen-istanbulda-yaban-domuzlari-sehre-indi-haberi-99560> ; <http://nediyor.com/2014/11/05/istanbul-bebeke-yaban-domuzu-indi/> ; <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/27553250.asp>



### 3.6. Birds

Appendix 19 of the EIA Report defines the area where the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project will be constructed as *“a field where many bird species carry out their vital activities due to the ecosystem variety it contains”*. Again according to the report, this area *“is on a route through which one of the Turkey bird migration paths goes”*. We had explained above what kind of a destruction the wetlands and forestlands in the area would go through, or even disappear because of the project; therefore, *“a field where many bird species carry out their vital activities”* will disappear too while the lives of the birds will be threatened.

The Science Coordinator of the Nature Association and a bird observer, Süreyya İsfendiyaroğlu, states that nearly 70 ponds in the region have become natural and bird species have started to benefit from them. İsfendiyaroğlu lists the types of the bird species all of which look the same and warns, *“If we displace an important stone on the path of the migration path of the birds by constructing projects over it, it will have a serious impact on the world’s bird population”*. Terkos Lake which is located right next to the project area not only provides a quarter of Istanbul’s drinking water need but also is very important for wildlife because bird species such as the endangered greater spotted eagle or pygmy cormorant hold onto life here. In addition, white tailed eagle, the biggest species living in Turkey is regularly found here. In western countries, even this much risk can prevent the realization of similar projects<sup>60</sup>.

Ornithologist Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zeynel Arslangündoğdu explains how deficient and erroneous the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report received for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project is in terms of the bird species and emphasizes that only 17 bird species are specified in the EIA Report whereas 160 species live merely in the Belgrat Forest, therefore there are at least 200 species who live and are seen in the North Forests. Arslangündoğdu, who underlines that a report was requested from himself urgently for the EIA while it is required that the birds be observed for at least two years for EIA reporting, states that this cannot be fulfilled within a short period of time because bird migrations show periodical decreases / increases and thus the data acquired during the decrease period will not be reliable<sup>61</sup>.

If we continue by quoting from TEMA’s report on the issue<sup>62</sup>, 94% of the project area is the natural suitable living area for the birds and also it is on the migration paths of the birds. These biotopes or living areas form wholeness together with the Terkos Lake.

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<sup>60</sup> [http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/dosyalar/yeni-havalimanindan-ucan-ilk-yolcu-cevre\\_535636](http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/dosyalar/yeni-havalimanindan-ucan-ilk-yolcu-cevre_535636)

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ompe4-lqnVw>

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.tema.org.tr/folders/14966/categorial1docs/1244/BUYUKPROJELER20032014data.pdf>



Figure 8. 15 Critical Resting Areas That the “Eastern” Storks Use During Their Migration.

It has been determined that there are 15 main resting-areas of the storks tracked by satellite transmitters in Germany on their Europe and Africa migration paths during their migrating and wintering. The first of these areas are those in the west and east of the Bosphorus of Istanbul. The work for the determination of these areas is being used as a base to a kind of conservation project called “Stepping Stone” in compliance with the Bern Convention<sup>63</sup>. Within the areas mentioned in this study are (1) deserted mining fields between the Terkos Lake and Kilyos, which also contains the project area and the Odayeri Dumping Ground, (2) The Karacaköy paddy fields located in the west of the Terkos Lake<sup>64</sup>. Therefore, these fields are very critical in terms of the future of the Storks’ (*Ciconia ciconia*) 500.000+ individual or 220.000 couple western population.

Again according to the EIA Report, this area is “on a route through which one of the Turkey bird migration paths goes”. Nearly 400.000 birds constituted of both storks of the soaring birds and raptors migrate through this route in spring and nearly 200.000 birds migrate through this route in autumn (Arslangündoğdu, 2011). “The migration paths of the birds that soaringly migrate have gone through the same route for ten thousands of years. Given the busyness of the planes, the control of the birds with radar is both expensive and risky. On one hand, these birds have to be protected in compliance with the Bern Convention while on the other hand it is obligatory to consider the possible airplane crash risks. Besides that, 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project poses hazard in terms of not only soaring birds but also the migration of the aquatic birds. The migration periods of the aquatic birds that live in the Terkos Lake and their passing through the project area in order to feed also creates danger<sup>65</sup>”.

<sup>63</sup> Berthold P, Van Den Bossche W, Kaatz M, Querner U. 2006. Conservation measures based on migration research in white storks (*Ciconia ciconia*, *Ciconia boyciana*). Acta Zoologica Sinica 52 (Supplement): 211–214

<sup>64</sup> Ornithologist Kerem Ali Boyla

<sup>65</sup> TEMA <http://www.tema.org.tr/folders/14966/categorialdocs/1244/BUYUKPROJELER20032014data.pdf>

Even though the EIA Report of the project doesn't trouble itself much with the future of the bird species, it has to touch on the problems that might arise in terms of flight security (pg: 185-190). In the report where it is understood that the required countings and determinations to establish the bird strike threat haven't been performed, a promise is made that these researches will be conducted in the future. In fact, the report promises to get rid of the birds with the precautions to be taken, not to protect them. The precautions to be taken are listed as follows: 1) the environments that attract birds will be destroyed 2) coniferous trees will be planted around the airport.

## 4. AIRWORTHINESS RISKS <sup>66</sup>

### 4.1. Birds and the Airworthiness Risk

#### Airworthiness Risks Stemming from Migratory Birds

Under the title “Airworthiness” is evaluated the risk of the birds’ making the planes that carry life and property crash. The possible negative impacts of the airport activity on wild bird populations have been reviewed above under the title “Birds”. On one hand the subject of concern is aeroplanes, on the other hand it is the birds. It is important to pay attention to this distinction.

Chart 2. Airworthiness Risk.

Topic \ Title	Airworthiness	Environmental Impact Assessment (specific to birds)
Research area	Project area and the 13 km approach scheme	Project area
Roosting Birds	Birds are expelled with various methods during the operation.	Assessment is made during the project development phase. If the project is APPROVED, necessary precautions are taken. Against the damage done in nature, recovery (mitigation) projects are developed, eg. The restoration of the wetlands in the vicinity, the creation of new areas etc.
Birds striking the aircrafts	Airworthiness is a subject that accepts no compromises. An airport in a wrong location cannot be operated effectively. That a plane cancels its first landing try and adds another sortie because of the birds is an extra cost of at least USD 1000. The damage caused by the birds entering the engine is much bigger.	There is no considerable threat in terms of the bird generations. Indeed, the total number of the birds striking is very limited. It is probable that most of the striking birds are abundant species such as starlings, seagulls and crows.
Migartory birds	They increase the airworthiness risk during certain periods and during certain times of the day. This can be at least 4 months a year and 10 hours a day. The movements of these birds in the air cannot be controlled.	

Istanbul is on the intercontinental migratory path of the birds. These species are “Migratory Soaring Birds”. Specific to Istanbul’s Bosphorus, these birds usually weigh between 150 gr

<sup>66</sup> This section has been written by Ornithologist Mr. Kerem Ali Boyla.

and 4 kg – therefore have serious impacts on their striking the aircrafts – and mostly are raptors such as crows, hawks, storks etc. These birds tend to save on energy to be able to cover the distances of thousands of kilometers and move forward with *soaring flight* without flapping and by using the thermal air currents formed above the lands. Therefore they have to go through large water masses such as Mediterranean and Blacksea and their density increases in such points as the Bosphorus of Istanbul, the Gibraltar Strait, the Çoruh Valley and Israel. A total of 500.000 storks and 250.000 raptors pass by over Istanbul.



Figure 9. The migration direction of the storks on which gps tracking devices were attached<sup>67</sup>.

However, birds around the world cause serious damages and deaths by hitting the aircrafts and rendering their engines inoperable. Bird strikes pose the highest level of danger during the landing and departing phases. A jet aircraft uses standard “approach schemes” during landing and departing. On these schemes, the aircraft flies at an altitude of below 1000 m within the last 13 km. When the runway directions of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport are taken into account, the planes will approach in the direction of NS, namely from the south in Northeaster windy weather and from the north (from the sea) in Southwester windy weather. Especially when the dominant wind Northeaster prevails, the approach from the south scheme starts from nearly over Arnavutköy. Therefore, when it comes to airworthiness, not only the space above the airport area, but also the 13 km airspace out of this area, which reaches upto Arnavutköy in the south should be assessed.

<sup>67</sup> <https://vimeo.com/45832484> : “Germany from above-stork migration”. The video in the link has been taken from the work of a data visualisation company called 422 South, which shows the migration direction of the storks on which gps tracking devices were attached. The storks set off in Germany; they migrate to the most west and most south of Africa through Iberia Peninsula and Turkey and they come back through the same route (the whole video can be watched on the link at the end of the explanation). As it is understood from the visual, the storks pass through above Istanbul’s North Forests in huge masses and they make their way back again through this irreplaceable ecosystem on their migratory path. As for the EIA Report of the 3. Airport, it gives “Struggle Procedures” (pg. 191) against all migratory birds including these storks, which do not comprehend the seriousness of the issue such as LP Gas Balls, gun bursts, alarm sounds, bird repellent balloons and birdscarers.

Especially in spring months, most of the migratory birds use the northern half of the Kocaeli and Çatalca peninsulas and follow the Blacksea shore line. The number of the birds that migrate in the spring through the project area as well as the 16 km frontage covering the aircrafts' approach scheme is very high. The numbers of the birds passing are given below based on their species and the season. According to this, if it is assumed that there is the same passenger capacity as that of Atatürk Airport, the risk that the migratory birds will strike the aircrafts that use the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport is 3-4 times higher.

The distribution of the birds that fly over Istanbul in numbers is as follows:

Chart 3. The strike risk to be caused by the migratory birds passing over Istanbul: The traffic volume is assumed the same as Atatürk Airport here.

	Species	Spring	%	Autumn	%	Total	Strike Risk
3 <sup>rd</sup> Airport	Storks	300.000	60%	Relatively less	-	550.000	3x
	Raptors	150.000	60%	200.000	80%		
Atatürk Airport	Storks	Relatively less		150.000	30%	150.000	1x
	Raptors	Relatively Less		Relatively less			

The data on the bird-plane strikes that have happened in Turkey so far such as the date and time of the strike, observation notes and the species of the birds have not been collected in a detailed way and also these data are just evaluated by the authorities in secret and not shared with public. After the Hudson River plane crash (bibliography), bird-plane strikes in civil aviation in the world have been regularly recorded and shared transparently. In this context, as stated in the studies of Dr. Zeynel Arslangündoğdu; comparing the number of the birds that fly through the airspace area and have a risk of strike is the best approach. It has been emphasized in the EIA Report too that the birds should be observed for at least 2 years<sup>68</sup>; however the Consortium has no such study or research.

#### **Airworthiness Risks Stemming from Domestic Birds (Seagulls)**

According to international standards, there should be no garbage facilities within the 13.5 km vicinity of the area where the airport will be built because these facilities attract millions of birds. Nevertheless there is the garbage disposal plant of İSTAÇ in Göktürk which is 6 km away from the project area and receives 3 million tons of garbage annually. In summer 30.000 - 50.000, in winter 100.000 - 200.000 seagulls feed in this field. These birds move from the city to the garbage, from the garbage to the circumjacent reservoirs (Küçükçekmece, Büyükçekmece, Sazlıdere Dams and most importantly Terkos Lake) and then to the sea along the coast of Blacksea and from there again to the city every day in coveys. They often use the mining fields, wetlands in and around the airport area. Flying birds may cause a serious problem for the aircrafts.

The grassland to be formed around the runways after the area becomes an airport might attract seagulls especially during certain seasons. Particularly at Atatürk and Van Airports, the seagulls that gather to eat the worms generated in the grassland around the runways in

<sup>68</sup> The report of Ornithologist Assoc. Dr. Aziz Aslan from Akdeniz (Mediterranean) University  
[http://www.radikal.com.tr/cevre/3\\_havalimanina\\_jet\\_hiziyla\\_yeni\\_ced-1180405](http://www.radikal.com.tr/cevre/3_havalimanina_jet_hiziyla_yeni_ced-1180405)



certain seasons have created serious danger. (Source: The viva interview made with an Airport Manager who worked at Van Airport). Regarding this, measurements can be taken, however the transportation of the garbage to somewhere else may be a matter of serious planning and cost.

## 4.2. Airworthiness Risks Stemming from Meteorological Conditions

Within the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project's EIA Report, the data from Kumköy and Florya Meteorology Stations on meteorological assessments and air quality models and the data from Göztepe Meteorology Station as height (main sounding data) have been used. TMMOB Istanbul Provincial Coordination Committee (İKK) 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport Technical Report<sup>69</sup> draws attention to the fact that Florya and Göztepe stations are quite far from the project area and are located in a milder area in terms of climate and thus questions the relation of these data with the project area. According to the report, Kumköy Station is the closest one to the project area with a 20-25 km distance, however because it is in a bay, it is more sheltered by location compared to the project area that is open to over-the-sea winds. Therefore, it is stated that the data from the meteorology stations used in the EIA Report don't reflect the values of the project area and it is also emphasized that the decision whether an airport should be built here or not has to be made by first establishing a meteorology station in the project area and performing a 5-year measurement, because the meteorological parameters at an annual 150 million people capacity airport have to be properly known<sup>70</sup>.

The report of Istanbul Provincial Coordination Committee (İKK) warns that the project area is open to the winds directly coming from above the sea and the aircrafts should take the coming wind from the front and their taking the wind from the side or the back is dangerous. As a matter of fact, Prof. Dr. Mikdat Kadioğlu of Istanbul Technical University, Aerospace and Aircraft Engineering Faculty, Meteorology Department underlines that the aircrafts should land and depart against the wind; however the runways at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport are being constructed without taking into account the directions of the dominant winds. The runways of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport in the directions of North-South and East-West take the two main winds of the city, Southwester and Northeaster that blow from the northeast and northwest from the side. Therefore, it is probable for the aircrafts that take the winds from the side to undergo wing flexure and to sway with turbulence while landing in rainy and stormy weathers<sup>71</sup>. It is known that the Turkish Aviation Association's Technical Unit has not been able to approve the project due to the reasons listed<sup>72</sup>.

Again according to Kadioğlu, the shores of Blacksea are the foggiest shores in the world and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project is not only in a wetland area but also on the shore of Blacksea. It is certain that this will be a foggy airport because the humid region will feed the fog carried from the Blacksea shore.

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<sup>69</sup> [http://politeknik.org.tr/sitew/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/3.havalimani\\_ikk\\_rapor\\_20141208.pdf?7b91f9&7b91f9](http://politeknik.org.tr/sitew/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/3.havalimani_ikk_rapor_20141208.pdf?7b91f9&7b91f9)

<sup>70</sup> ibid

<sup>71</sup> Interview with Mikdat Kadioğlu. Açık Radio, Kentin Tozu (The Dust of the City) Program dated 24 May 2013: <http://archive.org/download/KentinTozu24Mayis2013/KentinTozu20130524.mp3>

<sup>72</sup> <http://www.sendika.org/2014/12/tmmob-dogayi-yok-eden-3-havalimaninda-ucus-guvenligi-de-yok/>

This situation, when considered together with the runways built inconsistently with wind directions, will cause delays, dangers and problems at landings and departures, especially at landings, such as getting off the track and diverts (transfers to other airports)<sup>73</sup> and the airport will not be functional<sup>74</sup>.

Another significant warning is that the risks stemming from climate changes (twisters, excessive rain showers and storms) have not been evaluated in the EIA Report. On the other hand, in the EIA Report (pgs: 162 and 164) it is pointed out how problematic it might be to carry out air transportation and landings-departures to-from the runways in terms of physical environmental conditions in this region which has severe winds 107 days and dense cloudiness 65 days a year<sup>75</sup>. The President of the Chamber of Meteorology Engineers, Mr. Sitki Erduran too thinks that the location of the new airport does not seem meteorologically suitable looking at the current data.<sup>76</sup> In the interviews made with the local community at various times, it has been expressed that the area is mostly windy at storm strength and densely foggy.

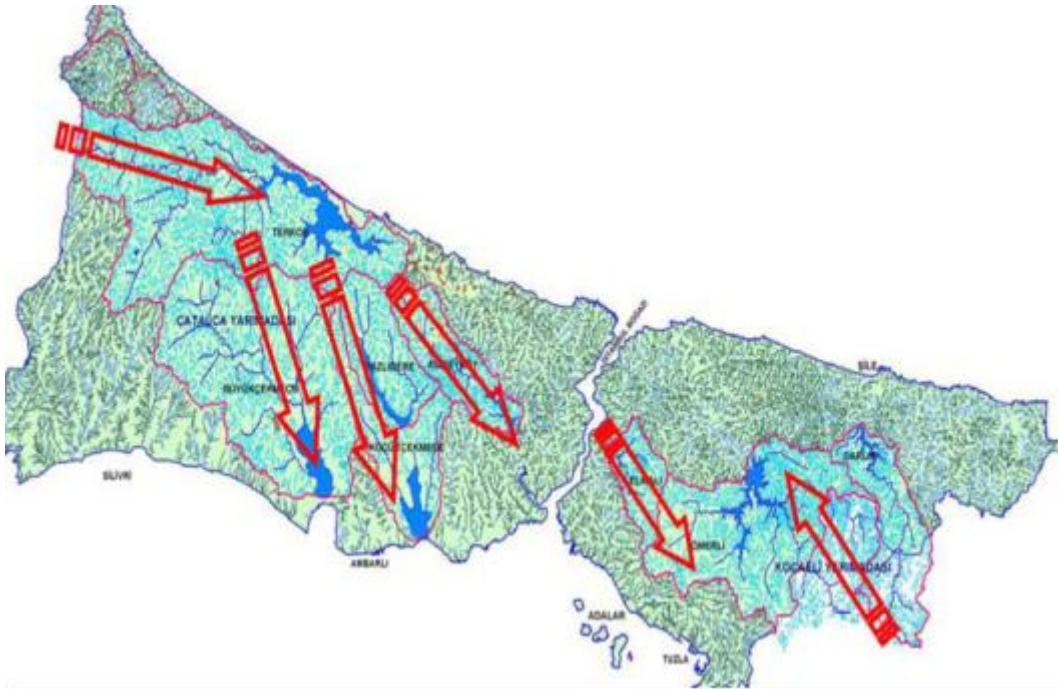


Figure 10. The directions of the Dominant Winds in Istanbul.

<sup>73</sup> <http://www.anadolujet.com/aj-tr/anadolujet-magazin/2012/aralik/makaleler/ucaklar-nicin-yonlendirilirler.aspx>

<sup>74</sup> Interview with Mikdat Kadioğlu. Kentin Tozu (The Dust of the City) Program on Açık Radio 24 May 2013: <http://archive.org/download/KentinTozu24Mayis2013/KentinTozu20130524.mp3>

<sup>75</sup> [http://politeknik.org.tr/sitew/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/3.havalimani\\_ikk\\_rapor\\_20141208.pdf?7b91f9&7b91f9](http://politeknik.org.tr/sitew/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/3.havalimani_ikk_rapor_20141208.pdf?7b91f9&7b91f9)

<sup>76</sup> [http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/dosyalar/yeni-havalimanindan-ucan-ilk-yolcu-cevre\\_535636](http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/dosyalar/yeni-havalimanindan-ucan-ilk-yolcu-cevre_535636)



Figure 11. The Project Area and the Directions of the Runways.

#### 4.3. Airworthiness Risks Stemming from the Particular Soil Structure, Fillings, Grades, Landslides

The field where the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport has been decided to be built on the shore of Blacksea, right next to the Durusu (Terkos) Lake is covered with lakes and ponds that have been formed by craters dug by old coal and sand pit operations and with these abandoned craters being filled with water over time. The report by TMMOB Chamber of Geological Engineers (JMO)<sup>77</sup> draws attention to the fact that the acceptable grade limit for the runways of international airports has to be low, even close to zero with regards to flight security and also points out that the location chosen for the 1. Airport remains between a hillside reaching upto roughly 130 m height in the south and the Blacksea shore in the north and in order to ensure this kind of grade, there is an obligation to fill the area in large amounts as well as to remove the tops of the hills. As a matter of fact, as stated on page 213 of the EIA Report, “...When the filling procedure is evaluated based on an average of 105 m grade for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport’s PAT (runway-apron-taxiway) fields, it is predicted that 2.5 billion cubic meters of filling material is needed according to the data received from Infrastructure Investments General Directorate”.

According to the JMO report, “Among the dangerous characteristics of the soil are that there is mud in the lakebeds whose thickness reaches upto 6.5 m especially in big lakes; waterlogged sediments with large surface areas and bulks of mining waste composed of loose material. Because of the reasons stated above, a solid ground couldn’t have been reached, even though tens of meters of muddy-clayey layers were cut during the drillings performed in the construction field”. As a matter of fact, the photographs of the drilling core boxes in the report substantiate this interpretation.

In the report of JMO, it is pointed out that a very large part of the airport including the 6 runways each with a 60 m width whose lengths vary from 3500 m to 4100 m, the landing strips next to them, the link roads between the runways and the other spaces that the

<sup>77</sup> [http://www.jmo.org.tr/genel/bizden\\_detay.php?kod=7263&tipi=2&sube=6](http://www.jmo.org.tr/genel/bizden_detay.php?kod=7263&tipi=2&sube=6)

airplanes will use within the apron area will be constructed over the soil that has all the negativities listed above. The report describes it scary that the runways will be placed on a ground filled with very different thicknesses, when they are assessed not only by their lengths but also by their widths and also proves it with photos that one side of some of the runways is on 20-m thick pit wastes while the other side of them falls on a lake. It is underlined that, in this case, the runways and the areas linking to the runways whose tolerance against fill settlement is zero will have very serious and nonrecoverable stabilization problems.

On the other hand, amongst the important warnings of the report are that there will definitely be huge filling settlements from place to place in the extra ground of nearly 2.5 billion cubic meters to be made up in order to bring the runways up to the internationally accepted standard grade, because settlements always occur in every ground that doesn't compose of rocks resistant to both its own weight and other lithostatic pressures. *“Even the fillings that are made very intently by using very special tools settle in time. Moreover, the material required to carry out a filling of such size will be a heterogeneous-compound material that will be brought from other places, which will increase the risk and amount of settlement even further.”*

Thus, specifying the impossibility of the stabilization of such an enormous filling, besides the settlements to occur due to the peculiar loose structure of the soil, the JMO Report draws attention to the following two important problems: 1- The settlements in the material that compose the current ground in the field 2- The settlements in the artificial filling of millions of cubic meters to be made.

The report emphasizing that the only solution for the filler to be used in the construction of the airport in the light of these assessments is to use rocks warns that in this case, hands will be laid on the surrounding forestlands covered with rocks with such reasoning as *“What are we supposed to do? Let Istanbul keep having the problem of airport shortage longer?”* and the limestones in the forestlands in the west of Kemerburgaz and in the southwest of Kilyos might be wanted to be used and the Northern Forests might be the new stone quarries of Istanbul.

On the other hand, the Report explains that this will not be a solution either and underlines that the biggest characteristic of the coal taken from the area which is an abandoned coal field is the high level of sulphur stemming from the pyrryl mineral in it and emphasizes the inevitability of the settlements and collapses in the fields inclusive of pyrryl mineral. Pyrryl that reacts easily and quickly with oxygen produces sulphuric acid. Thus, the ground will not be stable because serious settlements and collapses are unavoidable in the acidic environment to occur in time with the dissociation of pyrryl mineral in the construction field to be gained by the procedures of filling and removing. It is predicted that even the limestones to be laid over the sedimentary materials containing pyrryl and to be poured into lake holes will dissociate in time and cause new collapses.

On page 94 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> EIA Report it is stated that the opinion received from General Directorate of Mineral Research and Exploration is as follows, *“it is predicted that sudden collapses and settlements might occur in the ground because of the lithologies of the geological units, the high level of the underground water and the holes in the field formed in*

*consequence of coal operations*". However, it is also stated that there is no detailed geological and geotechnical etude report within the scope of the project and this report will be delivered after the site delivery and construction work will be carried out based on the results of the report. So in the case of a negative report outcome, how will the project proceed?

Also, on page 108 of the EIA Report it is stated that the characteristics of the soil have been assessed based on the unaffected soil samples taken from the boreholes and only the clayey sand or the sandy clay level below the mud level can carry the filling to be made and the attention is drawn to the soil's being clayey and possibility to swell because it is in a water base. It is suggested that the ratios of the filler mixing with the mud be checked periodically and the swelling analyses be made during the realization phases of the filling.

Another risk forewarned in the EIA Report (pg. 115) is landslide. In the Report it is said that, *"Landslide and landslip movements are seen within the boundaries of the project area and in the excavation pouring field in the southwest of the area as well as its vicinity. Especially in the part that falls on the excavation storage area of the Tayakadın-İhsaniye road are slumps and road distortions stemming from landslides. Additionally, there are slumps and slides in the soil in the fields distorted as a result of the mining activities in the area"* and thus the risk of landslides is pointed out.

In the project are the following risks; 1- The potential for liquification that might occur because the geological structure is not suitable for the project 2- The problems of bearing power stemming from the 2.5 billion m<sup>3</sup> filling to be made 3- Sudden and long-term settlements to occur 4- The situation of deep excavations and landslides 5- The impact of the underground water and hydrogeological structure on the fillers.

TMMOB, Istanbul Provincial Coordination Committee (İKK) 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport Technical Report<sup>78</sup> draws attention to another danger and states that departure and landing will not be possible from/to 70-m grade runways, which will come along as a result of the lowering of the project elevation from 105 m to 70 m. The Report points out that in a case where the airplanes depart from a lower place of 70 m instead of the 105-m grade, there should not be any obstacles in their surroundings during the flight, however in the south of the area where the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport is wanted to build is the North Marmara Highway project and there is the risk of the smashing up on the highway.

According to the Report based on the assessments that aircraft engineers and scientists have made by way of simulations, departure and landing from the land direction are impossible according to international airworthiness criteria because departure and landing are not theoretically possible from/to 70-m grade runways from/to the south of the airport. Either the removal of the tops of the hills there, which means that more trees will be cut, or the construction of the airport by taking the 105-m grade in the first tender specifications as a base again is required. And when the first option is chosen, we face another complication; that is to say, because the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge highway passes through the area where the hilltops are to be removed, again the project grades of the highway whose tender was made and construction is continuing will have to be changed!

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<sup>78</sup> [http://politeknik.org.tr/sitew/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/3.havalimani\\_ikk\\_rapor\\_20141208.pdf?7b91f9&7b91f9](http://politeknik.org.tr/sitew/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/3.havalimani_ikk_rapor_20141208.pdf?7b91f9&7b91f9)



## 5. THE ECONOMIC ASPECT OF THE THIRD AIRPORT

### 5.1. A General Outlook to the Future

Foreign trade deficit and the current account deficit are two of the basic problems of Turkish economy. Current account deficit which is the most negative side of the Turkish economy has continuously increased over the years while it was not even 1 billion usd in 2002. Current account deficit seems as if it were not a problem because it has been substantially financed with speculative – short term hot money since the 2001 crisis. However, this sort of financing itself is a problem; that is to say, the fact that the biggest source for meeting the current account deficit is hot money means that “hot money” flows dominate the dynamism of the country’s economy and shape its future. And this corresponds to economic instability and periods of expansions and constrictions<sup>79</sup>. Therefore, the possibility of the hot money faucet to be cut off affect all the developing countries negatively and each bond tapering performed by FED (the central bank of the United States) causes great panic in the markets. Turkey attracted a direct total investment of 22 billion usd in 2007 while this figure regressed to 12 billion usd in 2013<sup>80</sup>. Turkish economy that has been rotating on the axis of global capital movements and has adopted a wrong growth model with FED policies being on top, today, is in a constriction period where economic growth has slowed down and unemployment tends to increase or even gives the alarm.

The ongoing unemployment, inflation and partially current account deficit which are the consequences of the economic growth based on hot money are the 3 fundamental issues that we face<sup>81</sup>. Current account deficit looks like it narrowed down in 2014 by external factors (the decline in oil prices, the significant reduction in the shipment to Iraq, the recession observed in EU etc.), however, growth, as a negative side to that, actualizes far below the forecasts. While all the forecasts showed the growth around 3% in 2014, the data announced point to that a growth even below 3% might come out. As a matter of fact, according to the latest growth figures declared by Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK), the growth rate in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2014 fell lower than expected as is the case with 2nd quarter, but this time came out much lower than the forecasts and actualized as 1.7%. However the growth expectations of the economists and the analysts of the banks and brokerage houses for this quarter covering July-August-September were around 2.9 – 3.0. With this figure, the 9-month growth became 2.8% and it got difficult to meet the growth target that the government had announced as 4% and then lowered to 3.3% for the year 2014<sup>82</sup>. Furthermore, as made public by BETAM on 15 March 2015, the expected growth rate for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter is 0.2 in comparison to the previous quarter while in comparison to the same quarter of the previous year, no growth can be seen<sup>83</sup>.

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<sup>79</sup> Hüseyin Mualla Yüceol; Türkiye Ekonomisi Üzerine Genel Bir Değerlendirme; Toprak İşveren sayı 103; Eylül 2014: <http://www.toprakisveren.org.tr/dergi/2014-103.pdf> pgs 8-11.

<sup>80</sup> Mustafa Yağmurlu; Bugün; <http://ekonomi.bugun.com.tr/turkiye-cari-acikta-birinci-siradahaberi/1022136>

<sup>81</sup> Hüseyin Mualla Yüceol; Türkiye Ekonomisi Üzerine Genel Bir Değerlendirme; Toprak İşveren sayı 103; Eylül 2014: <http://www.toprakisveren.org.tr/dergi/2014-103.pdf> pgs 8-11.

<sup>82</sup> [www.netgazete.com/ekonomi/675683.html](http://www.netgazete.com/ekonomi/675683.html)

<sup>83</sup> Deniz Gökçe; “2015 ilk çeyreği de durgun”; Akşam 23.03.2015: <http://www.aksam.com.tr/yazarlar/2015-ilk-ceyregi-de-durgun/haber-391933>



On the other hand, the number of the unemployed has been increasing and the youth unemployment has run rampant. The number of the unemployed is the highest of the last 4 years. Upon the announcement of the August 2014 workforce, employment and unemployment data by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK) it has been determined that non-agricultural unemployment has approached 12.5%. The seasonal effects-free official unemployment rate 10.4% and the youth unemployment within this rate is 18.9%<sup>84</sup>. If we look at the figures, the number of the unemployed people climbed up to 3 millions by August 2014. When the 2 million 486 thousand people who don't look for a job but are ready to work are added to this number, the number of the unemployed reaches 5 million 430 thousand. 585 thousand of these 2 million 486 thousand people who are ready to work have now given up hope of finding a job<sup>85</sup>. According to the TÜİK September 2014 data, the seasonal effects-free number of the unemployed reached 3 million 64 thousand and the seasonal effects-free official unemployment rate reached 10.5%. When the group between the ages of 15-64 is taken into account, this ratio becomes 10.7%. Also the youth unemployment increased and became 19.1%<sup>86</sup>. With such unemployment consistently showing increase, neither income distribution imbalance can be solved nor can the struggle against poverty be reinforced. Therefore this scenery should be expecting social turmoils.

In an upward trend again, the inflation has been steadily increasing since January 2014 up to today. It reached the level of 9.5% by August 2014. Interest rates on the other hand range at a twofold level compared to December 2013. Both internal and external debt burden of the country has been increasing. According to 2013 data, Turkey, with a 359.5-billion-usd external debt, is the world's number second following Poland in terms of external debt measured against national income, with a 43.84% ratio<sup>87</sup>. The internal debt became 408.2 billion TL before the end of 2014. As for the external debt which was 130.9 billion usd in 2002, it peaked at the end of 2014 with an amount of 386.8 billion usd. A significant part of the external debt liability belongs to private sector, which poses a threat in terms of economic vulnerability. Also the risk stemming from the usd's being on the rise has to be considered here. The fact that foreign exchange reserve has exceeded 100 billion usd on the other hand offers neither sufficient credibility nor respectability against such a big liability<sup>88</sup>.

Depending on these data, it is possible to say that the long term economic performance of Turkish economy that is based on hot money entries does not look good. On the other hand, the possibility of FED to increase interest rates in 2015 and the fact that it will cease the quantitative improvement lays the groundwork for the stagflationistic mechanism to work in Turkey, namely the co-actualization of recession or unemployment and inflation at the same time. The housing and construction sectors that have been already approaching their saturation level will be negatively affected by all these developments. The rise in the foreign exchange should also be added to this negative picture<sup>89</sup>. USD has exceeded the limit of 2.50

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<sup>84</sup> [http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/ekonomi/142447/issizlikte\\_kriz\\_donemi.html](http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/ekonomi/142447/issizlikte_kriz_donemi.html)

<sup>85</sup> <http://metinturkiyilmaz.blogspot.com.tr/2014/11/issiz-says-son-4-yn-zirvesinde.html>

<sup>86</sup> <http://www.dunyabulteni.net/manset/317056/eylul-ayi-issizlik-orani-yuzde-105e-yukseldi>

<sup>87</sup> <http://www.bigpara.com/haber-detay/gundem/iflasin-ardindan-dikkatlerin-cevrildigi-dis-borc-ta-turkiye-ust-siralarda/945681/?bprtime=6512885603&sTo=900>

<sup>88</sup> Hüseyin Mualla Yüceol; A General Evaluation on Turkish Economy; *Toprak İşveren* issue 103; September 2014: <http://www.toprakisveren.org.tr/dergi/2014-103.pdf> s:8-11

<sup>89</sup> *ibid*

too by March 8, 2015 and peaked by reaching 2.62 Turkish Liras. Foreign press reported the situation with the following heading *“Turkey’s dangerous game risks financial chaos”*<sup>90</sup>.

The ongoing political crises and the clash environment in the world and particularly in the Middle East, especially the war in Syria and new migrations that might be re-triggered from Iraq and Syria, the oppressions for humanitarian aid and besides all these the general election to be held in 2015 will cause increasing polarization and tension in the country and will take effect on the economy, it has even started to do so. As a matter of fact, the increasing political uncertainty since December 2013 has affected the risk perception of Turkey’s economy in the external world and the economic outlook and credit evaluations have been negatively affected by this state of affairs<sup>91</sup>.

In the face of such a picture, the 150 million passenger calculation for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport in the EIA Report is based on the assumption that *“The increase in the passenger demand will be directly proportionate to the increase in Turkey’s population (pg: 17). Even if the population growth has been correctly calculated, there is no such thing as the country’s prosperity is equally distributed to each citizen, then again in the face of such an economic environment, next generation will be born in debt!*

## 5.2. Turkish Economy According to Credit Rating Agencies

Moody’s made the evaluation that *“...the ongoing domestic political tension and the uncertainty that will continue until 2015 general elections will not solve the economic and institutional difficulties in the way of Turkey’s credit score”*. Moody’s also stated that these economic and institutional difficulties were slow growth, high inflation, external vulnerabilities and the weakening of the independence of institutions such as the Central Bank and reduced Turkey’s credit outlook from “static” to “negative” in April 2014, and confirmed its “negative” condition in November 2014<sup>92</sup>. The weakness the regulatory institutions’ independence in Turkey has key importance for the credit rating agencies; Moody’s being in the first place. Moody’s has seen deficiency in creditworthiness with regard to the superiority of law and the effectiveness of the government, too<sup>93</sup>.

Another credit rating agency, Fitch who gave Turkey a rating score of “investible” made evaluations in parallel to Moody’s on 11 August 2014: *“Turkey continues to be vulnerable to external shocks. Political consistency is weaker in Turkey compared to other equivalent countries. The restart of the growth in loans may be negative for the reduction of the score”*. These warning of Fitch have a special importance because economy administration thinks that Fitchs approaches to Turkey more objectively in comparison to other credit rating agencies. As a matter of fact, after increasing Turkey’s credit score on 5 November 2012, Fitch has never changed it for almost 18 months in spite of major incidents that have made

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<sup>90</sup> <http://www.cnbc.com/id/102482406>

<sup>91</sup> <http://www.toprakisveren.org.tr/dergi/2014-103.pdf> pg:8-11

<sup>92</sup> <http://www.pazarlamasyon.com/2014/04/moodys-turkiyenin-kredi-notu-gorunumunu-duragandan-negatif-cevirdi/>

<sup>93</sup> ibid

the markets fluctuate. Furthermore, the announcements made during critical times gave confidence to the market. Now, that same Fitch is talking about 'reduction'<sup>94</sup>.

Not only Fitch, but also another important rating agency Standard&Poor's (S&P) too is warning Turkey. S&P confirmed Turkey's credit outlook as negative due to the high current account deficit and the external debt a significant part of which is short-term<sup>95</sup>. The agency states that the banks are vulnerable against the volatility in international markets because of the weight of the debts that will fall due within 12 months<sup>96</sup> and underlines that these evaluations are based on their views of the downside risks stemming from the fact that Turkey will need a serious amount of external financing in 2015<sup>97</sup>.

If we lend an ear to an expert from Turkey, TEB Investment Strategist Mr. Işık Ökte stated that the announcement coming from Moody's as well as the similar comments previously made by Fitch increased the risks on Turkey's "investible" rating and expressed that Current Account Deficit/National Income, public finance and the progress of The Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) in Iraq would be determinative on the credit rating in 2014<sup>98</sup>.

Besides these, experts of economics describe Turkey as the most vulnerable member of the group called the vulnerable-five. According to Mr. Geoffrey Dennis, Emerging Markets Strategy Director at UBS of Switzerland, who defines Turkey as one of the markets that have the biggest risk amongst the Vulnerable Five (Turkey, Russia, Argentina, India ve Indonesia), the opportunities few, if any, while the list of the risks is quite long<sup>99</sup>:

- "- The basic risk in Turkey is the current account deficit which is around 7% of national income and most of which is financed by short-term capital movements. This situation renders both Turkish Lira and Turkish markets in general defenseless against the possibility of the global capital flows to reverse.*
- Turkey is obviously a vulnerable country. When the excessive appreciation of the foreign currency is taken into account, it is one of the most vulnerable markets amongst the Vulnerable Five. The solution to this problem is to diminish the dependency on hot money and to increase the savings rate to attract long-term foreign capital.*
- The main risks for Turkey at the moment are the increase in USA bond yields, the exchange rate of USD which is stronger against the weak Lira, state intervention in the money policy, political risks and macro risks relating to Syria and Iraq turmoil<sup>100</sup>."*

Another warning came from IMF and it was stated that a sudden decrease in the macroeconomic parameters might lead to recession in IMF Turkey Report. The report draws attention to the fact that Turkey's low internal savings and limitedness in competition

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<sup>94</sup> <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/tr/originals/2014/06/turkey-credit-ratings-interest-rates-fitch-moodys-election.html#>

<sup>95</sup> <http://www.dunya.com/standard-poors-notu-teyit-etti-245256h.htm>

<sup>96</sup> Cumhuriyet Newspaper 20.11.2014 Economy page

<sup>97</sup> <http://www.dunya.com/standard-poors-notu-teyit-etti-245256h.htm>

<sup>98</sup> <http://www.wsj.com.tr/articles/SB10001424052702304099004580093192714137732?dsk=y&dsk=y&mg=ren>

<sup>99</sup> [http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/ekonomi/116053/Risk\\_cok\\_firsat\\_yok.html](http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/ekonomi/116053/Risk_cok_firsat_yok.html)

<sup>100</sup> ibid

restrict investment and exportation. And the report revises the medium-term growth rate as 3.2%<sup>101</sup>.

Chart 4. Ernst & Young July 2014 Report - Turkey, The riskiest country in terms of debt growth / GNP ratio.



As stated above, Moody's reduced the credit rating of Turkey from "static" to "negative" on 11 April 2014. The reasons they gave for this were *"increasing uncertainty that affected the confidence of both domestic and foreign investors negatively, liquidity constraints and Turkey's dependence and oppression in its external financing position"*. The evaluation of Moody's is a succinct expression of the scene we have explained above. The decrease in debt in foreign currency and the prolonged debt due date structure become even more serious with such projects and jeopardize the project financing.

### 5.3. Public-Private Partnership Projects and Short-Term External Debts<sup>102</sup>

When we review the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport within the context of Public-Private Partnership Projects and Short-Term External Debts too, a problematic picture becomes evident:

The external debt of Turkey whose outstanding external debt is around 400 billion usd, which it has to restore or pay back during 2015, exceeds 40% of the total.

It is informed that the next 12 months' external debt amount that has to be paid and was announced as 167 billion usd by the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey will raise difficulties for the banks and firms in debt because it coincides with the big appreciation

<sup>101</sup> 'Warning from IMF to Turkey *Birgün* Newspaper Economy page; 8.12.2014.

<sup>102</sup> This section has been written by Economist Mr. Mustafa Sönmez

period of usd. 96-billion-usd part of the 167-billion-usd external debt that is due within the 12 months of 2015 belongs to private banks.

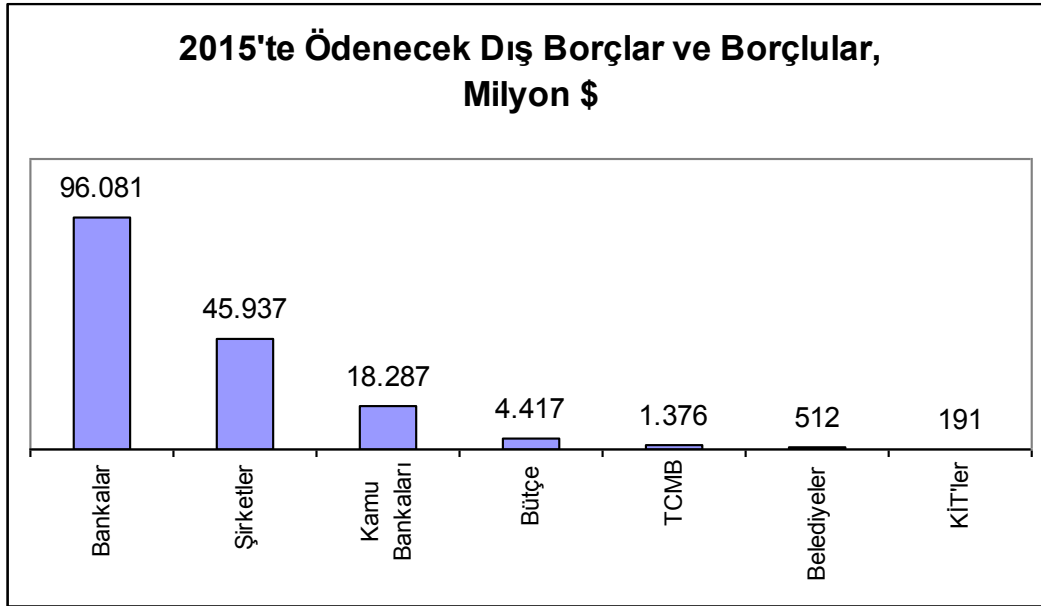


Figure 12. External Debts Due in 2015 and the Debtors (Million USD).

When the public banks' debt of almost 18.3 billion usd is added to the private sector banks' debt that constitutes 58% of the total short-term external debt, it is seen that the liability of the banks approaches 79%.

Private companies will also pay back their external debts of nearly 46 billion usd during 2015 and to do this they will probably try to find loans again.

The Central Bank data indicate that the increase in short-term external debt accelerated after 2011. While the external debt to be rolled over in 12 months in 2011 was 130 billion usd, it increased by 28% to 167 billion usd at the end of 2014.

The increase of the exchange rates in 2014 and the fact that this increase will continue in 2015 with the interest rate hike decision of the USA have also increased the TL cost of the repayment of debts. It is obvious that the exchange rate loss that the 167 billion usd to be paid during 2015 will cause especially for the banks and companies might lead to serious destruction on their balance sheets.

#### **5.4. What do the country risks and Turkey's credit default swaps (CDS's) say?<sup>103</sup>**

On top of the indicators used for the foreign investors who want to understand Turkey's risk is CDS's. Turkey is close to the top of the list in the ranking of the countries' CDS's, which means how much premium should be paid by an investor who will make an investment in a

<sup>103</sup> This section has been written by Economist Mr. Mustafa Sönmez

country to the institution who will insure their investment. One of the factors that have led to this result is the geopolitical risk that is emphasized more and more recently. The regional hot wars of the recent months put forward the concept of “geopolitical risk” for the countries. The President of European Central Bank, Mr. Draghi called attention to this and argued that this not only puts off the risk appetite, but also will speed up the deflation in European economy.

Even though it fluctuates, the risk premium of Turkey always tends to increase, especially now with the risk of finding itself in the middle of the clashes in the Middle East and Russia, added to the economic and political risks it has been going through.

Chart 5. Five Year CDS Data of the Countries

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### 5 Yıllık Ülke CDS\* Verileri

	2011	2012	2013	2014				2015	
	Yıllık Ort.	Yıllık Ort.	Yıllık Ort.	Q1 Ort.	Q2 Ort.	Q3 Ort.	Q4 Ort.	Ocak Ay. Ort.	12 Şubat
Brezilya	133	130	157	186	149	146	173	209	236
Çek Cum.	111	127	117	117	54	46	51	56	53
Çin	102	104	81	81	81	74	83	94	93
G. Afrika	152	160	190	190	181	182	184	204	202
G. Kore	124	110	72	72	57	52	53	62	63
Hindistan	81	89	68	68	51	48	50	48	45
Macaristan	370	475	295	295	198	169	156	155	148
Meksika	130	120	105	105	77	75	89	113	112
Polonya	199	175	87	87	63	61	66	66	61
Rusya	181	187	161	161	212	226	323	573	558
Malezya	107	107	100	100	93	82	90	135	128
Şili	84	98	80	80	71	68	78	105	99
Endonezya	171	165	190	190	158	145	152	164	155
Türkiye	206	210	172	172	189	183	181	184	193

Kaynak: Reuters

\* CDS: Credit Default Swap (Kredi Risk Takası)

## 5.5. The Drawbacks of the Public-Private Partnership (KÖİ) Model with Respect to Country's Economy<sup>104</sup>

During the period after 2003, many public-private cooperation models where the methods of build-operate, build-operate-transfer and build-lease were implemented started to be used in the public service field. On the other hand, it is observed that this model has been carried way beyond the reason for its use stated in the law as the preferences that require high technology or that arise from the service's exceptional qualifications and started to be utilized as mechanisms of funds transfer to certain capital groups.

<sup>104</sup> CHP (The Republican People's Party) 2015 Central Administration Budget Draft Law Counter Vote Article Public Private Partnership Section : See Appendix 1



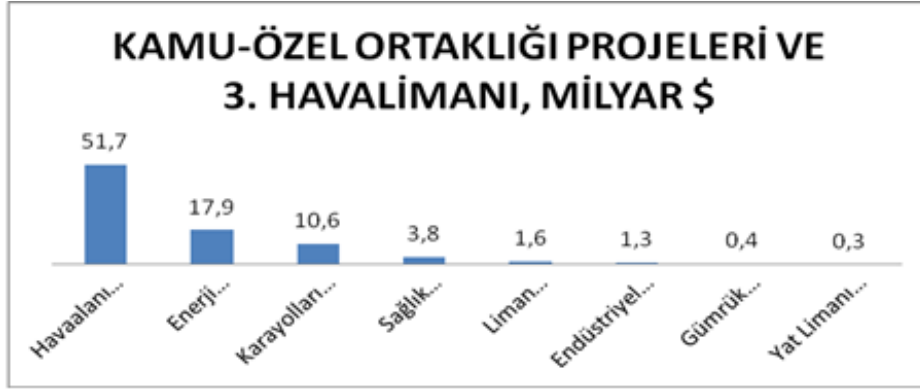


Figure 13. Public-Private Partnership Projects and 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport<sup>105</sup>.

Turkish economy, as we have explained above too, has budget deficits. In this context, even though it is thought that the realization of these infrastructure investments by the public itself instead of the KÖİ model will naturally increase the budget deficit and thus further indebt Treasury, especially in terms of external debt, the burden of the Treasury's going into debt itself is different than the burden of the private sector's debt within the framework of the KÖİ model in respect to the country's economy. That is to say, while the Treasury has the capability of going into debt with lower interest rates and longer terms, because of the Treasury guarantee put in the contracts for the investments of around 35 billion usd realized with the KÖİ model, the investments made within the framework of this model create prospective conditional liability and makes it possible for the private sector's external debt liability to be undertaken by Treasury where certain conditions are met. And because the Treasury's undertaking the liability will increase the public debt, the risk of the Treasury will increase. Not only the risk of the treasury, therefore the interest rates will increase, but also the possibility of the international credit rating agencies to reduce Turkey's credit score will come to the fore. Consequently, the Public-Private Partnership (KÖİ) model poses a serious financial risk potential on Turkey's financial system.

As a matter of fact, Treasury's cash deficit rose to 8.4 billions in February 2015. The rate of the undertaking of Treasury-guaranteed debts climbed up to 19.4% from 3.4%. This rise indicates that public institutions cannot pay back their borrowings. Therefore, Treasury undertakes these borrowings. Economist Mr. Süleyman Yaşar expresses that this sort of debt will increase swiftly from now on, because the ongoing devaluation shows that these sorts of debts cannot be paid. Yaşar specifies that the reason for the Treasury-guaranteed outstanding external debt's fast increase for the last two years reaching up to 10.5 billion usd is again the debts of the build-operate-transfer projects<sup>106</sup>.

Even though they provide that the budget deficit seems low in short term as conditional liabilities, KÖİ models lead to the liabilities' being extended to long term. The fact that the conditional liabilities of the state increased, the negative impacts of which we went through in November 2000 and February 2001 economic crises, causes serious uncertainties with regards to economy and increases the risks.

<sup>105</sup> <https://kamuozeel.kalkinma.gov.tr/Main.aspx>

<sup>106</sup> Süleyman Yaşar. 'Now that the economy is fine, why have you gathered urgently?', *Taraf Newspaper* Economy, 13.03.2015 <http://www.taraf.com.tr/yazarlar/madem-ekonomi-iyi-niye-acil-toplandiniz/>

Additionally, since it is not possible to comparatively see the costs of an investment made by the relevant ministry within the scope of the public investment program and the costs of it made by a contractor company within the scope of the KÖİ model using one of the Build-Operate-Transfer, Build-Operate or Build-Lease methods, the public opinion doesn't know why a specific model has been chosen or what the economic reasons behind it are. As emphasized by Economist Mr. Uğur Gürses in the following section, this model is not open to transparency. Very importantly, it is against democratic criteria that the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (TBMM) doesn't have any authority to control or audit the investments made with the KÖİ model.

After explaining such drawbacks of the KÖİ model, we can say that this project should be re-considered economically, because the fact that such a financially enormous project as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport that might have serious effects on the country's economy is not inspected by the National Assembly as well as its cost analyses that are not transparent and the project's financial risks that we explained below through the BETAM report will cause fiscal burden on Treasury and therefore on the economy in general.

## 5.6. Airport Project and Transparency

Economist Mr. Uğur Gürses complains about the fact that the part 'who will do' the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project is transparent, however 'what will be done and how it will be done' is still unknown to the public opinion on his article titled *"Make It Up As You Go Along"* dated 8 May 2013: *"The public opinion is aware of who will ultimately build a gigantic airport with what kind of letting value for 25 years but they don't have the least idea about the construction phases, guarantees given or periods allowed<sup>107</sup>."* To expand the subject continuing with Gürses, the details of the tender conditions are not open to the public opinion. For example, that the construction cost of the project planned to be completed part by part might be 10 billion Euros, which constitutes a 1/3 condition of equity capital and the operation fee of 22 billion and 152 million Euros will be paid in annual installments after the airport starts to operate. On the other hand, the public opinion is in the dark about whether the annual rent will start to be paid after the whole project is complete or after the first stage or in a gradual proportional way. Similarly, *"to be able to evaluate whether the 22 billion and 152 million Euros which is the total amount of the 25-year rent is good or bad, great or ordinary and to make a price - bad price assessment, finance mathematics is needed and for that, knowing the conditions is needed and the public opinion is still in the dark."*

Again according to Gürses, there are news in the press stating that feed-in tariff, revenue guarantee and the guarantee that Atatürk Airport will be shut down and no new airports will be built are given to the Consortium within the framework of the tender specifications. Based on the information received from those who technically support this project, it is said that the tender price is so high because the condition that Atatürk Airport will be closed is offered in the tender specifications. As a matter of fact, in the 2013 DHMİ (General Directorate of State Airports Authority) report of the Court of Accounts the following statements have been made, *"The first stage of the airport will be completed in 42 months at the latest. In 2018 when the new airport will be opened, Atatürk Airport will be closed to*

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<sup>107</sup> [http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/ugur\\_gurses/kervan\\_yolda\\_duzulur\\_projesi\\_ucuncu\\_havalimani-1132643#](http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/ugur_gurses/kervan_yolda_duzulur_projesi_ucuncu_havalimani-1132643#)

*scheduled flights. No certain decision has been made as to what purpose Atatürk Airport will be used with”<sup>108</sup>. The date of Gürses’ question about Atatürk Airport is May 2013 and only after nearly 2 years, finally in March 2015 can the public opinion learn from official sources that Atatürk Airport will be shut down<sup>109</sup>!*

The most important one of the guarantees given to the Consortium is that the public authority will reimburse the expenditures made until the respective date if there is a rescission after the construction reaches a certain degree. On the other hand, if the Consortium says in the future *“We can’t obtain finance, give us Treasury guarantee,”* the public opinion doesn’t know what the answer will be either. In this case, if a Treasury guarantee is given, wouldn’t it mean that the conditions will be changed after the tender is done is another question.

The passenger guarantee, again one of the guarantees given for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport, has been warranted by the passenger service fees to be paid out of the pockets of the citizens. That is to say, the state guarantees that 20 Euro per person will be paid until the contractor earns 6.3 billion Euros within 12 years. It is stated in the answer that was given to the question by Prof. Dr. Zerrin Bayrakdar by the Ministry of Transport that: *“The passenger service fees have been determined as 20 (twenty) Euros for international departing passengers and 5 (five) Euros for international arriving and then international departing passengers and a demand (revenue) guarantee corresponding to 342 million international passengers (including transfers) limited to the first 12 years of the operation has been given to the incumbent company by the administration”.*

## **5.7. “The Fate of the Mega Airport Depends on Growth”**

Bahçeşehir University Economic and Social Research Center (BETAM) published a detailed report titled *“The Fate of the Mega Airport Depends on Growth”<sup>110</sup>*. If we quote from the summary of the report:

*“The tender of the new Istanbul airport that is aimed to be one of the largest airports in the world when completed was made on May 3, 2013. The Joint Undertaking of Limak-Kolin-Cengiz-Mapa-Kalyon obtained the right to build and operate the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport of Istanbul for 25 years with an offer of 22 billion and 152 million excluding VAT. This tender has been registered as the highest amounted one in the history of the Republic and also brought along the questions whether such a big airport is needed or not and if the airport will be profitable as a private operation... The purpose of this study is to research how realistic the passenger capacities are and how profitable the new airport will be for the companies who won the tender.*

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<sup>108</sup> <http://www.aktifhaber.com/ataturk-havalimani-kapatiliyor-1102725h.htm>

<sup>109</sup> <http://www.sabah.com.tr/ekonomi/2015/03/02/hamdi-topcu-ataturk-havalimani-kapanacak>

<sup>110</sup> <http://betam.bahcesehir.edu.tr/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/ArastirmaNotu150.pdf>  
<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/fate-of-the-mega-airport-depends-on-growth.aspx?pageID=238&nID=50215&NewsCatID=396>

*We use a qualitative method that takes into account the changes in population, economic growth and ticket prices to forecast the number of the passengers. We fulfill passenger number projections from 2019 to 2043 within the framework of two different scenarios regarding economic growth. In scenario 1, when the growth is assumed to be 5% for the 2013-2019 period, 4% for the 2020-2030 period and 2% for the 2031-2043 period, we forecast that the number of the passengers will be 80 million for 2019, 120 million for the second half of 2020s and 150 million in 2030's. On the other hand, in scenario 2 where the growth rates are assumed to be 4%, 3% and 1,5% in the same periods, 90 million can only be reached in the second half of 2020s. As for the 120-million capacity, it is seen that it will only be needed toward 2050s. In the light of these forecasts, it is understood that a mega airport in Istanbul will only be needed, provided that Turkey accomplishes an economic improvement around the level of well-accepted potential growth rate. At the same time, in the case that the economic growth stays below the predicted potential, it can be said that the new airport will remain limited with a 90-million passenger capacity.*

*As for the discussions on the profitability of the airport; we make a hypothetical profit and loss analysis for the new airport that includes aviation units and commercial enterprises, by using our passenger number forecasts. According to the results we have found, within both of the scenarios, we predict that the new airport operation will make loss with regard to both aviation and commerce revenues in the 2019-2030 period, in other words until the end of the credit debt term. The forecasted cumulative loss reaches up to 5.7 billion Euros in scenario 1 and 7.7 billion Euros in scenario 2. The airport that starts to bring profit after 2030 makes a total profit of 7.3 billion Euros recovering the cumulative loss by the end of 2043 in scenario 1. On the other hand, in scenario 2, a total loss of 4.8 billion Euros comes up because the cumulative loss is not recovered.*

*These profit and loss forecasts have been made without taking into account the non-operating revenue (the revenue arising from the various usages of the land allocated). However, every airport has such kind of revenue. But no forecasts have been made regarding these revenues. Still, we would like to emphasize one point; for the new airport to be able to be reasonably profitable under the low growth presumption (scenario 2), it will have to generate a non-operating revenue that is considerably above 10 billion Euros within the 25-year period"*

Having summarized the picture as above, Toru and Gürsel state that the Consortium should mark up 17 Euros per passenger to close the loss-profit equally, however this would decrease the demand for the airport and point to somewhere else, which is the opening of the lands around the airport to construction. The USA Atlanta Airport that has the highest passenger capacity in the world gives a service of 95 million passengers / year and covers a surface of 1,900 hectares. If we continue with this calculation, while 3.500 hectares is sufficient for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport that is planned to give a service of 150 million passengers / year, what purpose does the remaining 5.700 hectares serve? This brings to mind that this way the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport lands may be opened to construction and real estate activities aimed at rent

and to be held by the Consortium members who are already owners of construction companies. As a matter of fact, the answer to the question that who will be tendered for the ostentatious new city projects in the vicinity of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport, if actualized, lies here!

If we consider that the exchange rate continuously appreciates while increasing the costs as well, it doesn't look possible for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport Consortium to make a profit in the near future. In addition to this negative picture, according to the latest growth figures announced by TÜİK (Turkish Statistical Institute), the growth rate of the 3. Quarter of 2014 actualized below the predicted rate again just like it had been in the 2. Quarter; but this time it remained far below the forecasts and actualized as 1.7%; however the growth expectations of the economists and the analysts of the banks and brokerage houses for this quarter covering July-August-September were around 2.9 – 3.0. Thus it got difficult even to meet the growth target that the government had announced as 4% and then lowered to 3.3% for the year 2014<sup>111</sup>. If Turkey doesn't leap forward in an extraordinary way, as we have scrutinized in the economy section above too, a positive state of affairs is not in sight under today's circumstances even within the scenario 2 in BETAM's report.

So, saying that the actual intention of the mega projects such as the airport, the bridge and the canal directed at the Northern Forests is to let the companies plunder the last virgin areas of the city wouldn't be wrong. Moreover, as explained in the last section of this report, the hands of the Consortium members are already dirty with several investments that destroy the environment and nature brutally.

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<sup>111</sup> [www.netgazete.com/ekonomi/675683.html](http://www.netgazete.com/ekonomi/675683.html)

## 6. CAN GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF STATES AIRPORT AUTHORITY (DHMI) SURMOUNT THE 3<sup>rd</sup> AIRPORT PROJECT?

Not only because of its geographical size and location and cost-financing but also because of its contractor companies' existence in other sectors, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project touches many institutions, organizations and citizens, thus it is a project that will seriously affect in the first place Istanbul and Marmara Region, and eventually whole Turkey. Its negative impacts will be felt by every citizen of the Turkish Republic who will incur future debts due to the incremental costs of the project. As indicated by economist Mustafa Sönmez, the project cost which was officially announced to be 16 billion usd has already escalated to 20 billion usd because of the increase in the value of usd globally. Sönmez underlines that the cost will be financed by tax payers and that in the long run Turkey might become another Greece since *"Greece has got into trouble because of such uneconomical public investments and infrastructure projects"*<sup>112</sup>:

The relevant institution that has the main responsibility for this project which clearly needs to be cancelled as soon as possible when the ecological destruction and economic burden that it will cause or its negative effects on the means of living of the locals who live in the area or its destruction on water basins and Northern Forests is taken into account, is the General Directorate of State Airports Authority (DHMI). Naturally, it is required for DHMI who bears the biggest responsibility for such kind of a project to be trustworthy and have a sound administrative, legal and economic structure that could run this process, but DHMI is far away from drawing such a portrait. What is stated below is worth attention in that it realistically explains the seriously bad state of one of the institutions that are directly responsible for the project, apart from the insistence on not giving up on this project that means the beginning of the end for Istanbul.

### 6.1. Site Delivery

The site delivery that is one of the most important indicators of this project's gaining reality has not been done by the time this report is shared with public opinion (March 2015). From the respective correspondences of the Court of Accounts, it is understood that DHMI has provided the Consortium with a site for the work to be done after the site delivery, even though it hasn't done the site delivery yet.

Turkish Court of Accounts gave wide coverage to the problems relating to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport in its DHMI 2013 Audit Report<sup>113</sup> while examining the accounts of the institution. The Court of Accounts emphasized that the site delivery couldn't still be done even though 1.5 years had passed since the tender. On page 121 of the Turkish Court of Accounts 2013 DHMI Audit Report it is stated that:

*"In the response letter dated 28.01.2014 and numbered 8005 by the General Directorate of State Airports Authority (DHMI) to the incumbent company, it is said that; 'As a result of the inspection made by our institution, the following has been found out; as understood from the*

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<sup>112</sup> Nur Banu Kocaaslan; Diken: <http://www.diken.com.tr/3-havalimaninda-4-milyar-dolar-ek-maliyetboyle-projeler-ulkeyi-yunanistan-yapar/>

<sup>113</sup> <http://www.sayistay.gov.tr/rapor/kit/2013/66-DHM%C4%B0%202013.pdf>



*related letter (b), while just the work necessary for the start of the drilling activities and for the roads to provide transportation to the project area of the airport in question was going to be held, when the projects in the related letter (e) are examined, we see that not only the places required for the drilling operations have been provided, but also the construction of the worksite buildings, the parking areas of the construction vehicles and equipment storage areas have been established, which should be done after the site delivery,. At this stage, because Istanbul Airport's site delivery hasn't been fulfilled, there is no action to be performed by our institution and the permission files brought to our attention are returned enclosed herewith."*

## **6.2. Financial Standing**

According to the report of the Court of Accounts, DHMİ has been acceleratingly making loss since 2009 and doesn't seem to have the financial structure necessary to get through this project: *"While its net operation capital was 386,7 million TL in 2009, it started to range at negative levels dating from 2010; and for the last 4 years actualized respectively as -146,3 million TL, -398,5 million TL, -708 million TL and -942 million TL (Court of Accounts, DHMİ 2013 Audit Report, pg. 29).*

The Court of Accounts documents that the airports operated by DHMİ bring losses, not profits:

*"As of 2013 year end, only 7 of the total 47 airports operated (excluding Hakkâri) make profit..." (Court of Accounts, DHMİ 2013 Audit Report, pg. 83)*

The suggestions are listed as follows too: *"The public service characteristic of the service activities structure of DHMİ outweighs. It has been observed that the investments with this aspect increase by periods and this too has an important impact on the fact that expense increases are above income increases. When the institution's future investment plans, profit and loss projections and financial expectations are scrutinized; it is understood that expenditure-source structure will keep changing in favor of expenditures. Therefore, it is important that plannings be made to strengthen the financial structure and measures be taken within this framework that will provide increase in sources and income and savings in costs and expenditures, the payment of the outstanding capital being in the first place" (Court of Accounts, DHMİ 2013 Audit Report, pgs. 137-138).*

Again according to the report of the Court of Accounts, despite the guarantee given, once the passengers didn't show demand, 27 million Euros were paid to three airports by the state. At Ankara Esenboğa, Milas-Bodrum and Zafer Regional Airports, in compliance with the agreement made with the operator company, if the promised number of passengers cannot be met, the state reimburses the lacking amount. According to the report of the Court of Accounts, within this framework, 1 million and 782 thousand and 780 Euros was paid to Milas-Bodrum Airport's operator, 5 million and 84 thousand Euros was paid to Zafer Regional Airport's operator and 20 million and 907 thousand Euros was paid to Esenboğa's operator.

It is an object of curiosity how such an institution that is already in loss will be the guarantor of a huge project as 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport! At this point comes in to play the guarantee regulations

published on April 19, 2014 that enables the Treasury to give guarantee for big infrastructure projects under the name of “liability undertaking”.

### **6.3. The Deception that “the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport Project is out of the coverage of Treasury guarantee”**

Undersecretariat of Treasury published a “Liability Undertaking Regulation” regarding the undertaking of liabilities that provides state guarantee for big projects, which was announced in the official gazette on April 19, 2014<sup>114</sup>. According to this regulation:

*“Liability undertaking is a mechanism that is implemented for the projects realized with the build-operate-transfer (YİD) model within the framework of the provisions of Law numbered 3996 by the general budgeted public administrations as well as the special budgeted administrations. It is not possible for the Undersecretariat of Treasury to give a commitment for the undertaking of liabilities for the projects of public economic enterprises and local administrations that they will fulfill with the YİD model.”*

Based on these statements made in the Regulations; 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project will fall out of the liability undertaking because it will be done with the build-operate-transfer (YİD) model. But the detail that is not mentioned much is how DHMİ whose budget has had increasingly bigger deficits especially for the last 4 years will be supported .

Cumhuriyet Newspaper Columnist Ms. Çiğdem Toker published a number of articles on the subject on 21 April, 23 April, 30 April and 12 May 2014<sup>115</sup>. Toker mentions in her articles what the concept of “liability undertaking” masks and how the Treasury will indirectly be made the guarantor for the loans to be taken for this project:

From the article titled “Who are you kidding?” dated 21 April 2014:

*“-The Ministries of Transport, Health or their subsidiaries who have the projects done give “state guarantee” in order not to say Treasury guarantee. For example, Ministry of Transport guarantees the number of passengers. But be careful; it doesn’t stop there where it should stop.*

*-Because the Ministry of Transport or Health is not the Treasury or the Revenue Office, they don’t have their own money. They receive allocation from the budget. But they even guarantee the exchange rate and interests, putting themselves in Treasury’s place.*

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<sup>114</sup> <http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2014/04/20140419-12-1.pdf>

<http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2014/04/20140419.htm>

<sup>115</sup> “Who are you kidding?”:

[http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/koseyazisi/62935/Kimi\\_Kandiriyorsunuz\\_.html](http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/koseyazisi/62935/Kimi_Kandiriyorsunuz_.html)

“Who are you kidding? (2)”:

[http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/koseyazisi/63735/Kimi\\_Kandiriyorsunuz\\_2\\_.html](http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/koseyazisi/63735/Kimi_Kandiriyorsunuz_2_.html)

“Why is the Treasury Confusing?”:

[http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/koseyazisi/66345/Hazine\\_Neden\\_Kafa\\_Karistiriyor\\_.html](http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/koseyazisi/66345/Hazine_Neden_Kafa_Karistiriyor_.html)

“Who will pay for the debts of 3.Airport?”:

[http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/koseyazisi/70943/3.\\_Havalimani\\_Borclarini\\_Kim\\_Odeyecek\\_.html](http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/koseyazisi/70943/3._Havalimani_Borclarini_Kim_Odeyecek_.html)

- On the other hand, the rule never changes. The creditors always want to see the Treasury as their addressee in order to give money to the projects of the companies knocking on their doors.
- And the Treasury puts the “Liability Undertaking Mechanism” into play with a system added to the law in December 2013 and the regulation of which was published on the weekend.

*In this way, three birds are killed with one stone:*

*The Treasury happens to not have given “guarantees”. The politician happens to say “I am not giving any guarantees”. The creditor (bank) is also happy with the job done. What is that job? It is the ability to get its money back under any circumstances, if there is a problem in the future... Actually, these undertakings called “financial risks” should normally be in the records of the Treasury. However, this list that reaches an investment size of hundreds of billions of dollars when put one under the other doesn’t appear in the liability portfolio of the state.”*

From the article titled “Why is the Treasury confusing?” dated 30 April 2014:

*‘Treasury will not give a liability undertaking commitment for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport that the DHMI tendered because it is a public economic enterprise.’*

*Is it really so? I wish it were... But it’s not. Again, there is such a provision in the Build-Operate-Transfer Law numbered 3996 and often referred to in the announcement of the Treasury that it immediately denies this piping-hot explanation: See what is said in A-2 of the 11<sup>th</sup> provision titled Credit Undertaking: ‘On the agreements regarding the investments and services fulfilled by the public institutions and organizations and their subsidiaries and the local administrations that fall out of the general budget, in the case that it is set forth that the agreements are annulled before their time and the facility is taken over by relevant administrations, the administration in question is authorized to undertake the financial liabilities including the financing obtained from abroad for the financing of the investment and services and also the ones stemming from the derivatives towards the obtaining of this financing, if any. In the case that this administration is in the scope of the special budget, the Council of Ministers is authorized to decide that the respective administration will undertake these liabilities upon the proposal by the respective Ministry that the respective administration is affiliated with and to determine the scope, component and terms of payment of the financial liabilities subject to the undertaking and to regulate the procedures and principles relating to its approval.’*

*To summarize: Whether it is a public economic enterprise (KIT) or a local administration, if its investment is annulled before its time, the path to the undertaking of its loans extended abroad is widely open DHMI will write a letter to the Council of Ministers. And the Government will tell the Treasury “Undertake that liability”. That’s all.”*

From the article titled “Who will pay for the debts of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport?” dated 12 May 2014:

*Advisor to Treasury, Mr. İbrahim Çanakcı, said at the ceremony of the additional financing of Marmaray Project obtained from European Investment Bank that “Because DHMİ has a status of public economic enterprise (KİT), there is no such thing as our undertaking liabilities at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project”. So how will it be? It looks like DHMİ will undertake the possible debts of the 22.1-billion-Euro project for the sake of which even the Minister of Environment and Urbanization doesn’t know “how many trees will be cut” But with which financial structure? When the debt appears in the records of DHMİ instead of the Treasury’s, do our taxes get recovered?*

Besides Toker’s articles above, some of the questions asked by economist Uğur Gürses and quoted in the “Airport Project and Transparency” (5.6 ) section of this report are answered similarly by Istanbul Parliamentarian Mr. Aykut Erdoğan in his article published in BirGün Newspaper on 22 September 2014<sup>116</sup>. Erdoğan says that AK Party changed the Build-Operate-Transfer Law before the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport tender and thus laid the way open for the takeover by DHMİ of the loans taken from abroad if something happens to this project and he also states that because DHMİ will not be able to pay back such a large amount, the guarantee will eventually be demanded from the Treasury, because there is the Treasury standing behind DHMİ which is a public economic enterprise:

*“The situation is much worse at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport. The Consortium that will operate this place for 25 years will have this airport cost 10 billion usd. The money that he needs to put out of his own pocket is 20% of this, which is 2 billion usd. The rest will be brought with loans. There is no such kind of money inside, it has to be brought from outside. That is not easy either but let’s say he brought it. Then, 8-billion-usd loan will have been guaranteed. Because, AK Party changed the Build-Operate-Transfer law and thus laid the way open for the takeover by DHMİ of the loans taken from abroad if something happens to this project. Because DHMİ will never be able to pay back such a large amount, the guarantee will eventually be demanded from the Treasury, because DHMİ is a public economic enterprise and the Treasury stands behind it. I believe it is needless to say that this change set the pool-people’s minds at rest. Another guarantee given for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport is passenger guarantee. A total of 6.3-billion-Euro passengers for the 12 years after the operation of the airport starts have been guaranteed. Of course this has been warranted by the passenger service fees to be paid out of the pockets of the citizens. If you go abroad, you will pay 20 euros per person. Even if you don’t go, the state will pay for it as if you went. Up until the contractor earns a 6.3-billion-euro revenue in 12 years.”*

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<sup>116</sup> “There is a 100 Billion USD Secret Debt!”: <http://www.birgun.net/news/view/100-milyar-dolarlik-gizli-borc-var/5914>

#### **6.4 DHMİ's Legal History: Its 24 employees including the General Manager are engaged in lawsuits upon determination of irregularity in 9 tenders!**

DHMİ is an institution not only whose financial structure makes one brood but also that has serious problems about its administration and reliability. The institution has been in court with regard to both its own personnel and internal operation processes and its relationships with other companies involved in the operational processes of airports. Mr. Orhan Birdal who had been the general Manager of the institution since 2007 and was relieved of duty on February 21, 2015<sup>117</sup> -who made the following explanation on this development: "I heard about it this morning too. I don't know anything at the moment."- is one of the DHMİ employees who were sued for irregularity. Mr. Serdar Hüseyin Yıldırım, who was appointed an independent member of the board of Turkish Airlines, became the new General Manager of DHMİ after Birdal<sup>118</sup>.

Thus, "With the appointment of Mr. Serdar Hüseyin Yıldırım from Rize a few days before for the office of General Manager of DHMİ that had been vacated by Mr. Orhan Birdal, the name on top of DHMİ is once again from the Turkish Airlines management, after Orhan Birdal who had been a Board Member there until a couple of years before but then left.

The tenders that DHMİ made and irregularities have been determined in are as follows:

1. Adnan Menderes Airport power transformer need tender
2. Purchase of electrogen tender for Esenboğa Airport and Bursa Yenişehir Airport
3. The tender for the purchase of electron groups for Sivas and Elazığ Airports
4. The tender for the purchase of transformator for Mardin Airfield
5. The tender for the vacant electrogen groups at Şanlıurfa Airfield
6. The installation tender at Çanakkale Airfield,
7. The tender for the purchase of illuminated routing boards and transformers for Antalya Süleyman Demirel, Tokat, Mardin, Kahramanmaraş, Adıyaman, Çanakkale, Sivas, Muş, Kayseri, Diyarbakır, Konya, Siirt, Sinop, Merzifon, Balıkesir and Van Ferit Melen Airports
8. The tender for the authorization of the electron groups in SSY stations
9. The tender for the purchase of diesel electron groups for İzmir Çatalkaya, Elazığ Harput and Malatya SSY stations.

Regarding the tenders listed above, 24 suspects including Orhan Birdal who had been the General Manager of DHMİ at the time of these tenders were sued for alleged "collusive tendering"<sup>119</sup>. It was asserted in the expert reports placed in the indictment that the suspects made "irregular and baseless tenders without conducting a market research".

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<sup>117</sup> <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/28259634.asp>

<sup>118</sup> <http://www.dhmi.gov.tr/haberler.aspx?HaberID=2407#.VPyOmI4aucs>

<sup>119</sup> "Lawsuit for Irregularity Against DHMİ General Manager Birdal":  
<http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/27574172.asp>

DHMI General Management, Presidency of Committee of Inspection determined unaccredited money entries into the accounts of some of the personnel working at the tender commissions, in its report dated March 29, 2010. In the report, it was stated that some personnel had monetary relationships with the companies for whose audit and control they were responsible. The Committee of Inspection who scrutinized all of the 9 tenders that had been made determined that the tenders were performed irregularly and made a denunciation about the suspects at Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office.

DHMI made an explanation after these developments in November 2014 stating that Birdal had nothing "directly" to do with the allegations and necessary steps had been taken on Birdal's initiative for a serious examination of the allegations upon an advice letter that had come to Birdal in 2009 even though the tender procedure had been completed and Birdal had delegated the Presidency of the Commission of Inspection<sup>120</sup>. Soon after this announcement, DHMI discharged Birdal whose sensitivity against corruption and irregularities they had emphasized!

Birdal gave an interview on apronmedya.com website on February 20, 2015, which was full of several diversions and deceptions about the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project and included the following explanation too, "We made a tender in front of the whole world's eyes!"<sup>121</sup>; however, he forgot about the fact that the tender was made in front of the whole world's eyes" without the completion of the announcement-hanging period of the EIA report. He seems to not know that this situation is a serious unlawfulness and irregularity!

It is not hard to guess that a government official who worked as DHMI General Manager for 8 years has a lot of experience and information about the institution he worked for. Additionally, it can be said that it would be impossible for him to stay on duty for such a long time without a strong trust relationship with governmental bodies that DHMI is answerable to. However, Orhan Birdal was dismissed without even the need for informing himself of the situation. So what is the reason for that?

The condition of the institution that is mainly responsible for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project that is praised as the biggest project of the Republic of Turkey that will drag Istanbul and Marmara Region to ecological catastrophe and that will exploit the "rich" sources of the public without the knowledge of the public is no different than the project itself.

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<sup>120</sup> <http://www.bugun.com.tr/son-dakika/dhmi-genel-mudurlugu--haberi/1347406>

<sup>121</sup> <http://www.apronmedya.com/3-havalimani-ile-gelecek-50-yilimizi-planladik/>



## 7. THE LAW

With the ongoing projects such as 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge and 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport, the law has been violated, the Constitution<sup>122</sup>, the applicable laws and international conventions being in the first place.

As follows:

The 45<sup>th</sup> Article of the Constitution under the title Ownership of Land that requires, *“In order to prevent the out-of-purpose usage and destruction of the agricultural lands, meadows and pasturages of the state, necessary measures aiming at increasing the production based on agriculture and stockbreeding being carried out in these fields should be taken”* has been breached.

The 56<sup>th</sup> Article of the Constitution under the title Health, Environment and Housing that specifies, *“Everyone has the right to live in a healthy and well-balanced environment and it is the duty of both the State and citizens to improve the environment, to protect the environmental health and to prevent environmental pollution”* has been breached.

The last clause of the 90<sup>th</sup> Article of the Constitution under the title of Compliance with International Conventions that expresses, *“International Conventions put in to effect in due form have the force of law. The Constitutional Court cannot be applied with a plea of unconstitutionality about these. In the case of any disputes that may arise due to the fact that international conventions that relate to basic rights and liberties and were put into effect in due form and the law have different provisions on the same subject, international conventions are taken as a basis ”* has been breached.

The 63<sup>rd</sup> Article of the Constitution under the title of The Protection of Historical, Cultural and Natural Assets that states, *“The state ensures the protection of the historical, cultural and natural assets and values and with this purpose, takes supportive and incentive measures”* has been breached.

The 166<sup>th</sup> Article of the Constitution under the title of Economic Provisions that states, *“It is the duty of the State to ensure economic, social and cultural progress, especially the rapid improvement of industry and agriculture at a national level in a balanced and coherent way, the planning of the efficient usage of country’s resources by providing an assessment and breakdown of them and the necessary organization”* has been breached.

The statement in the Constitution under the title of The Protection and Improvement of Forests, *“The State makes the laws and takes the precautions that are necessary for the protection of the forests and expansion of their lands. New afforestation activities are held instead of the forests that are burnt; no other sorts of agriculture or stockbreeding can be carried out on these lands. The supervision and protection of all forests belongs to the State”* has been breached.

*“Any activity or action that would harm or damage the forests is prohibited. The crimes committed with the purpose of burning the forests, destroying the forests or*

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<sup>122</sup> [https://global.tbmm.gov.tr/docs/constitution\\_en.pdf](https://global.tbmm.gov.tr/docs/constitution_en.pdf)

*narrowing down the forests cannot be included in the scope of general amnesty or pardons” statement has been breached.*

The 169<sup>th</sup> Article of the Constitution stating, *“The boundaries of the forests cannot be narrowed down, except for the lands that no benefit is found in their being kept as Forests in terms of science and nature, on the contrary that it has been determined that there is certain benefit in their being transformed into agricultural lands; the lands that completely lost their quality of being a forest in terms of science and nature before the date 31/12/1981 and it has been determined that there is certain benefit in their being used for stockbreeding or as agricultural lands such as croplands, vineyards, orchards and olive groves; places where the compositions of cities, towns and villages exist collectively”* has been breached.

“According to the Istanbul Environmental Plan that was approved and put into effect in 2009 and is scaled 1/100.000, which is accepted as the Constitution of Istanbul, the project area is a forestland, a water basin, a rural settlement area, a shore rehabilitation area, a geologically unfavorable land for housing and one of the lands whose agricultural quality has to be protected, however the location of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport has been determined as Yeniköy-Akpınar villages that are in the North Forests and the Constitution of Istanbul has been breached too.

In compliance with the 10<sup>th</sup> Article of the Environmental Law and the 3<sup>rd</sup> clause of the 6<sup>th</sup> Article of the EIA Regulations, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport cannot be built without the EIA Report positive decision, however the tender of the project was made before the EIA: *“For the projects subject to these Regulations, unless the decision that ‘Environmental Impact Assessment is positive’ or ‘Environmental Impact Assessment is not necessary’ is made, no incentive, approval, permit or license of construction or usage can be granted for these projects and no investment can be started for them and they cannot be tendered.”*

Moreover, even though it is said in the EIA Report (pg: 20) that *“Within the scope of the Istanbul Region 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project planned to be built, it is not planned at this stage to start any constructions beyond the shore edge line or to fill the sea”*, in the plans that have been carried to the court by professional chambers, the confirmed borders of the plan exceed the shore edge line and shows a Blacksea water area of nearly 20 hectares in the air area legend. This is against the The Protocole and The Convention on the Protection of Blacksea against Pollution.

## **7.1. EIA Camouflage for the Massacre**

The EIA reports required for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project were prepared in March and April 2013 and March 2014 by AK-TEL Engineering Company that has prepared EIA reports for many HPP (Hydroelectric Power Plant), mining and poisonous waste storage projects. Although the big damages that the project will cause on Istanbul’s North Forests have been referred to in these EIA reports prepared, the result for the project has been shown as positive.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> EIA Report that was admitted as the final one made do by suggesting “legal methods” for the massacre that it accepted and the General Directorate of EIA Permits and Controls of the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization gave a positive opinion for the

report via its decision dated May 21, 2013 and numbered 2992. Professional chambers and some citizens brought two separate lawsuits for the suspension and nullity of the execution of the EIA positive decision. The lawsuit of the Professional Chambers was sent to the State Council with the decision of foreign plea while the lawsuit of the citizens concluded.

4 citizens had entered a lawsuit about the 2<sup>nd</sup> EIA Report on the grounds that; it is far from being scientific; is desultory; doesn't include technical data; was prepared without a geotechnical/drilling survey/etude being held against the risk of landslides; the "10 working days" during the opening for viewing rule was not complied with; the geological, geotechnical, hydrogeological and meteorological data of the report are unreliable and erroneous; the side winds have not been taken into account according to the direction of landings to the runways; it is caused that natural lands are destroyed, the forest lands being in the first place, and the impact of heat island increases; drinking water basins are irreversibly damaged and wetlands are destroyed; the truth about the noise and electromagnetical pollution that will be led to is not correctly reflected; the acoustic report was not prepared regularly and in due form; the necessary solutions to the predicted problems are not provided and also the agricultural lands and meadows are destroyed. In addition to these, as underlined by Mr. Murat Taşdemir who is one of the plaintiffs and also the former Chairman of the Chamber of Environmental Engineers, it is clearly against the 6<sup>th</sup> Article of the EIA Regulations that the tender had been made before the "EIA is positive" decision was made. The announcement-hanging period of the EIA Report on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport ended on May 7, 2013, however the tender was made on May 3, which is an obvious irregularity.

A decision for the suspension of the execution of the EIA Report "positive" decision was made by Istanbul 4<sup>th</sup> Administrative Court on January 21, 2014. The Court suspended the execution of the project until the expert examining is performed about the claims<sup>123</sup>. While the activities relating to the project were expected to completely cease for at least 10 months to 1 year upon this decision by Court, the General Directorate of State Airports Authority (DHMI) announced that the project was going to continue despite the decision and the Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications, Mr. Lütfi Elvan informed that the decision of the Court was not going to stop the airport construction!

On March 11, 2014, Istanbul Regional Administrative Court revoked the decision of the 4<sup>th</sup> Administrative Court for the suspension of the constructional work until the experts' examination is performed, concluding the objection of the Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications against the suspension of the execution.

In the meantime, during the course of the court, a new EIA report was prepared by the Consortium hastily and submitted for the approval of the Ministry on March 6, 2014. This new report that is almost 4 times longer than the previous 339-page report, reached up to 1347 pages with the addition of new files such as maps and drilling info prepared during the project phase<sup>124</sup>.

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<sup>123</sup> See. Appendix 3

<sup>124</sup> [http://www.radikal.com.tr/cevre/3\\_havalimanina\\_jet\\_hiziyla\\_yeni\\_ced-1180405](http://www.radikal.com.tr/cevre/3_havalimanina_jet_hiziyla_yeni_ced-1180405)

## 7.2 The Big Pelf before the Start of the Project

After the tender had been finalized, a revision of the technical specifications was made. That is to say, because of increasing external debit interests and exchange rates, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport undertaken by the Consortium with a price of 22 billion 152 million Euros has currently faced a massive cost increase. Because the usd /euro parity which was 1.40 when the contract was signed in mid-2013 has fallen to 1.05 in 2015, the projects seems to be doomed to high currency losses.

The Consortium couldn't fulfill the 1-billion Euro expenditure needed to be spent at the first stage of the investment, because no international funds could be found. Thus a tendency to revise the technical specifications arose in the Consortium who couldn't agree on the method to follow to solve the problem.

According to the final EIA Report, for the construction to be able to be executed in compliance with the project specifications, it was required that the old mining pits and ponds in the region be filled, thus a total of 2 billion 500 million cubic meters of filler was required according to the average 105 m grade. The Consortium decreased the construction cost by pulling the filling implementation down to 70 meters and caused the public a damage of 2 billion usd.<sup>125</sup> However, the tender should have been cancelled because many holding companies withdrew from the tender due to the costs that the filler will cause<sup>126</sup>. The Ministry of Transport gave the following answer to the query of Prof. Dr. Zerrin Bayrakdar about this subject,<sup>127</sup> *"The Istanbul New Airport tender made by the General Directorate of State Airports Authority (DHMI) on 03 May 2013 with a model of Build-Operate-Transfer was lodged with concept (avant) projects. Platform grades were determined in the projects in the addendum of the tender and it has been stated that there might be changes in grades and coordinates while detailed studies and calculations are being held during the preparation phase of the application projects in the addendum contracts of the tender"*.

## 7.3. A Project Arisen Against the Law

If we take a look at the tender process of the project by quoting from the petition dated 12 September 2014 and numbered 2014/1900 that was filed by TMMOB Chamber of Architects Istanbul Big City Branch, TMMOB Chamber of City Planners Istanbul Branch and TMMOB Chamber of Civil Engineers Istanbul Branch in Istanbul 6th Administrative Court:

*"The decision to make the tender of Istanbul New Airport with a sealed bid method on 03 May 2013 at 9.30 am was made almost a year before the plans' announcement-hanging period; and both the proccess of development of the plans and the process of the hanging of the announcements of them that are the matter in dispute were fulfilled in an extremely unlawful way. This has been a proof of the fact that the planning work in dipsute was seen as a trivial and simple*

<sup>125</sup> <http://tr.turvet.com/main/3-havalimani-insaatinda-buyuk-vurgun-iddiasi> ;

<http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/88575/3-Havalimani-insaatinda-vurgun-iddiasi.html>

<sup>126</sup> The columns dated 30 June, 2 July, 5 July and 7 July 2014 by Sözcü Newspaper columnist Mr. Necati Doğru on the subject should be considered

<sup>127</sup> See. Appendix 2

*process whose law and principles of planning needed to be fulfilled on someone's say-so with sudden commanded orders".*

### **The Tender was made before the Completion of the EIA Report**

If we continue with the same court petition:

*"Furthermore, the EIA process of the project and implementations that were supposed to start after the planning process in dispute started in March 2013 and the EIA Report became final with the EIA positive decision made by the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization on 21 May.*

*While no action regarding the plans had been taken yet and before even the completion of the deadline for the EIA Report, the tender was made on May 3, 2013.*

*About the EIA Report "positive" decision in question that was made after the tender, a decision for the suspension of execution was made by Istanbul 4th Administrative Court, however another new EIA Report was prepared while the prosecution process was still continuing.*

*Thus, the "Istanbul New Airport Project" that is the matter of the plans in dispute arose in the first place against the law. It was started illegitimately and planlessly with a tender declared null and void, with an EIA Report that was circumvented from the judgement process and finally an EIA positive decision; its groundbreaking ceremony had been held on June 7, 2014, namely 10 days before the date June 17, 2014 when the announcements of the plans in dispute were hung".*

### **The groundbreaking of the project whose Site Delivery hadn't been done was held<sup>128</sup>**

As understood from the answers that the Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications, Mr. Lütfü Elvan gave to Mr. Aykut Erdoğan's parliamentary question, it comes into the open that the tender specifications were not taken into consideration at all. That is to say, it is proposed in the tender specifications that the construction will be completed after 42 months from the site delivery of the project and more importantly, the operation period of 25 years will start right after this delivery.

In this case, while the site delivery should have been completed within 2 months after the date the tender was made, May 3, 2013; it becomes evident from the explanation of the Minister Elvan that the site delivery hadn't been done yet! Thus, it is understood that the groundbreaking of the project whose site delivery hadn't been done yet was held by then Prime Minister Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on June 7, 2014!

What does this delay mean? The 16-month delay in the site delivery of the project whose tender was won with 22 billion and 152 million Euros for 25 years means that a fund of almost 1.5 billion Euros was transferred to the pocket of the operator in addition to the excavation! (Both the grade's being lowered and the site delivery's not being done create an unlawful situation)

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<sup>128</sup> <http://sozcu.com.tr/2014/yazarlar/ugur-dundar/bakan-elvana-da-operasyon-gelecek-mi-652882/> Also see the 6.1 Site Delivery section of this report.

## Lawsuits Brought by Professional Chambers

TMMOB Chamber of Architects Istanbul Big City Branch; TMMOB, the Chamber of City Planners Istanbul Branch and TMMOB, the Chamber of Civil Engineers Istanbul Branch submitted the Environmental Plan Amendment scaled 1/100000, the Land Use Plan scaled 1/5000 and the Implementary Development Plan scaled 1/1000 that belong to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport that they regard as one of the biggest city and nature massacres in the world together with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge and its freeways to the court primarily for the suspension and nullity of execution on September 12, 2014<sup>129</sup>. Principally, the suspension and annulment of the Istanbul Environmental Plan and the other plans that are specified to be clearly against global urbanization planning and principles as well as the public interest is demanded<sup>130</sup>.

According to Ms. Mücella Yapıcı from TMMOB, the Chamber of Architects, while normally these projects should be primarily entered into the Environmental Plan and then the next step should come, the process today is continuing the opposite way round and what should be done first is being done last. Yapıcı emphasizes that the plans in question reduced all of the strategic decisions of the Istanbul Environmental Plan scaled 1/100000 such as those relating to transportation and housing to a null and void state; turned the natural balance of the region upside down and are against all of the principles of planning science<sup>131</sup>.

The tactic of revising the plans during the judicial process to escape law has been implemented in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport Project too and new development (construction) plans scaled 1/1000 and 1/5000 were hanged as announcements in early October 2014<sup>132</sup>.

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<sup>129</sup> For the Court Petition: <http://mimarist.org/images/pdf/3-havalimani-dava-dilekcesi.pdf>

<sup>130</sup> For the Court Petition: <http://mimarist.org/images/pdf/3-havalimani-dava-dilekcesi.pdf>

<sup>131</sup> [http://www.yapi.com.tr/haberler/ucuncu-havalimani-planlari-davalik-oldu\\_124807.html](http://www.yapi.com.tr/haberler/ucuncu-havalimani-planlari-davalik-oldu_124807.html)

<sup>132</sup> <http://www.sabah.com.tr/yasam/2014/10/06/3-havalimaninin-yeni-plani-askida>



## 8. LOCAL COMMUNITY AND JUDICIAL PROCESS

### 8.1. Nonsuits for TOKİ's (Mass Housing Development Administration of Turkey) Expropriation<sup>133</sup>

The Council of Ministers assigned a 42.300-hectare land at the Blacksea Coast on the European Side of Istanbul where mega projects will be built including the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport as a "Reserve Construction Area" on August 18, 2012. The Ministry of Environment and Urbanization charged TOKİ (Mass Housing Development Administration) with executing the necessary work and operations for the expropriation of this reserve area with its decision date April 8, 2013.

Having obtained the eminent domain, TOKİ started working for the expropriation of the lands where the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge, 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport and Canal Istanbul projects will be constructed and offered agreements to the landlords with certain prices as from May 2013; however it confronted the objections of the landlords. Thereupon going to court, TOKİ demanded the cancellation of the land registrations of these lands totaling 14 parcels and the registration of them under its own name at a price determined by legal experts, stating that because they did not accept the expropriation prices, the landlords were not able to mutually agree.

All 14 lawsuits that TOKİ brought against the landlords were heard in Istanbul 3<sup>rd</sup> Civil Court of First Instance. The defendants reminded that the lands in dispute remained within the construction field of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport to be built and stated that the prices offered by TOKİ were too low compared to the precedents and TOKİ made them an offer ranging between 22 TL and 35 TL per m<sup>2</sup> while the precedent lands in the same region found buyers from 300 TL to 500 TL per m<sup>2</sup> according to their locations. The legal experts too confirmed that the prices of the lands of the landlords varied between 300 TL and 500 TL per m<sup>2</sup> based on their locations, therefore TOKİ had to expropriate with these prices.

Having decided based on the views of the legal experts, the Court ruled that the plaintiff TOKİ would deposit the amounts determined by the experts to the defendant landlords' bank accounts at the trial held in April 2014. TOKİ who declared that the amount was too high complied with neither this decision nor the court decision dated June 4, 2014 that ruled for the depository injunction a second time. Consequently, Istanbul 3<sup>rd</sup> Civil Court of First Instance concluded the suits against TOKİ. Having reminded that TOKİ had not deposited the determined amounts to the defendants' bank accounts even though a depository injunction was verdicted a second time at the previous trial, the Court ruled that the expropriation annotations put onto the title deeds would be revoked along with the finalization of the decision.

The lawyer of Akçelik Mining Corporation, Mr. Kemal Altın states that no action or operation can be performed with regard to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport construction in the 14 lands that are in dispute and continues as follows: *"They will either change the Project and exclude our lands from the airport construction or make a new expropriation decision and start another judicial*

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<sup>133</sup> <http://www.diken.com.tr/ucuncu-havalimanini-toki-carpti/>

process. Another option is that they will have a new agreement with the landlords without going to the Court<sup>134</sup>.”

## 8.2. The Lands of the Villagers Usurped by Urgent Expropriation

The Council of Ministers who saw that the reserve area announcements and expropriations didn't work, put an important legal instrument into practice that it had also used in the HPP (Hydroelectric Power Plants) and urban transformation projects with which it had been in trouble with, for the smooth progress of the Project and instrumentalized the law by clinging to hasty expropriation announcements. The Council of Ministers made a decision for TOKİ's "urgent expropriation" of the lands in İmrahor, Tayakadın, Yeniköy, Ağacli, Akpınar and İhsaniye Villages within the scope of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project, without any justification and with its decision dated January 2, 2014<sup>135</sup>.

Urgent expropriation decisions that can normally be made only under extraordinary conditions such as war or disasters, but recently that have been made one of the major instruments of the urban transformation projects, propose that the valuation of the real properties be performed after all the properties are seized.



Figure 14. Diken Newspaper, 6 June 2014. <http://www.diken.com.tr/9-soruda-ucuncu-havalimani-projesi>. Protests from the Villages: "Urgently expropriate so that none can see"

## 8.3. Lawsuits Brought Against Urgent Expropriation: There is No Public Benefit / Is There Warfare<sup>136</sup>?

The urgent expropriation decision for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport, which was published in the Official Gazette dated January 17, was submitted to the jurisdiction by the habitants of Yukarı Ağacli Village. Filing a claim on behalf of Yukarı Ağacli villagers, Istanbul Bar Association demanded

<sup>134</sup> ibid

<sup>135</sup> <http://www.diken.com.tr/9-soruda-ucuncu-havalimani-projesi/>

<sup>136</sup> [http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/3\\_havalimani\\_icin\\_savas\\_hali\\_kamulastirmasina\\_cifte\\_dava-1178075](http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/3_havalimani_icin_savas_hali_kamulastirmasina_cifte_dava-1178075)

the revoke of both the decision by the Council of Ministers for the authorization of TOKİ for urgent expropriation and its basis, the 'public benefit' decision.

On the other hand, nearly 100 villagers brought a separate lawsuit and demanded the revoke of the urgent expropriation decision. Both lawsuits were filed to be conveyed to the State council via administrative courts.

In the lawsuit that it brought against the Council of Ministers and TOKİ to which the expropriation authorization had been delegated, Istanbul Bar Association stated that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport would destroy the forestlands and agricultural lands and damage the drinking water basins, accelerate the climate change, create noise and electromagnetic pollution and because of all these reasons, did not offer public benefit. In the petition are listed the international environmental conventions to which Turkey is a party and also it is stated that Terkos and Küçükçekmece lakes are internationally important wetlands and the land that will vanish within the scope of the project *"is the only area where biological diversity and ecological balance try to survive, that cleans Istanbul's air, provides its precipitation, water, vegetables and dairy products and to which the urban sprawl hasn't reached yet"*.

Bar Association stated that the Council of Ministers could not use the urgent expropriation authorization for the construction of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport and said, *"It is obvious that the act in dispute does not have the characteristics of "national defense" or "that is similar to national defense"*.

In the petition was it also reminded that Istanbul 4th Administrative Court suspended the execution of the 'EIA positive' decision that paved the way for the tendering of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project on January 21 until the court investigated the viewing to be held in the area as well as the expert report.

In order to be realized at all costs, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project proceeds by tearing down the law and the concepts of justice and rights upon which law itself is based. As we mentioned above, for the lands that are announced to be reserve areas and for which an expropriation decision is issued, somehow an urgent expropriation decision is also issued afterwards, thus a judiciary strangeness such as a multiplied expropriation is being implemented. According to the news report of Ms. Elif İnce that was published in Radikal Newspaper on February 23, 2014, for the 169 parcels in Yukarı Ağaçlı Village, first an expropriation decision within the scope of the 42-thousand-hectare 'Reserve Area' announced with the Disaster Law, and then an urgent expropriation decision for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport was made.

A group of citizens from Ağaçlı brought a separate lawsuit against the Prime Ministry and demanded the revoke of both expropriation decisions. The lawyer of the lawsuit Ms. Meral Umut Akarçay says, *"We are expecting a positive decision from the State Council for the lawsuit that we brought in behalf of almost 100 villagers. Even before it comes to the principle, the deficiencies in the method are sufficient for a revoke. This is the first time we have ever encountered double expropriation decisions for one land."*

Akarçay also states that the area cannot be expropriated without the development plans scaled 1/1000 being made and there are precedent decisions on the subject that the State Council made before. In addition to these, she also states that even though the first expropriation decision for the reserve area was made 6 months before, the expropriation

conditions were not fulfilled, no price was determined, no notification was made; only a meeting letter was sent and annotations were put onto the land registrations. *“Therefore the first decision is already null and void,”* she continues.

In the petition, it is also claimed that the authority for urgent expropriation that is granted to the Council of Ministers under extraordinary conditions such as national defense is abused for a commercial project; the seizure of the lands of the citizens under the name of ‘reserve construction area’ and putting these lands at the contractors’ disposal with a tender violates the proprietary rights.

## 9. CONSORTIUM PARTNERS LİMAK-KOLİN-CENGİZ-MAPA-KALYON EVERYWHERE / PILLAGE AND SHADY BUSINESS EVERYWHERE!

The right to construct the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project and to operate it for 25 years has been granted to Limak-Kolin-Cengiz-Mapa-Kalyon Joint Undertaking Group with a 22 billion 152 million Euro offer.

The Tenders given to the Consortium Members during the AKP Governments Period:

**Tenders won by Cengiz-Limak-Kolin Partnership:** BEDAŞ (Bosphorus Electricity Distribution Corporation) - Istanbul European Side Bosphorus distribution privatization, Akdeniz (Mediterranean) Electricity distribution privatization, Uludağ Electricity distribution privatization, Sivas-Tokat Yozgat (Çamlıbel) Electricity distribution privatization, Yusufeli Dam and Ankara High-speed Train Terminal Project

**Tenders won by Cengiz Construction Corporation by itself:** Hasankeyf Ilisu Dam, Atasu Dam, İstanbul Subway Taksim-4. Levent route, Ordu- Giresun Airport infrastructure, Maltepe Coast Filling Project, Eti Aliminium, Oymapınar Dam and Antalya Eti Port Operations.

**Tenders won by Cengiz-İC İctaş (the contractor of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge) Partnership:** Ankara – İstanbul High-speed Train 1. and 2. Stages, Trabzon Aşkale highway.

**Tenders won by Cengiz-Kalyon Partnership:** Şile Ağva Highway

**Tenders won by Kalyon itself:** Taksim Pedestrianization Project, Metrobus transportation line, Çağlayan Intersection Road Construction, Bakırköy Court House, Ataköy Waste Water Treatment Facility as well as a total of 100-billion-TL public tenders.

### 9.1. Land Speculation in the Area and Land Pillage by Favor of TOKİ

After the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport tender was given to Limak-Cengiz-Kolin-Kalyon-Mapa corporations, the mass land purchases that have been observed in recent years in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge - 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport area since the time when the projects were first mentioned and the speculation activities by virtue of the middlemen climbed up. Luxurious construction projects done both by TOKİ and İBB / Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (KİPTAŞ / Istanbul Residence Development Plan Industry and Trade Inc.) and construction companies have become common in the region.

According to the news of real-estate web-sites:

*Mr. Kadri Aydın who is the owner of Neo Construction Co. that has constructed luxurious housing and shopping mall projects in the Kemerburgaz-Göktürk-Bolluca region, such as “Neo Vista, Neo Market, Neo Garden, Neo Park, Neo Studio, Neo Life, Lakepark” says: “This is just the, this will be the most exciting region of the next 10 years. Even just the airport employees can form a city here. Moreover, it is impossible to think of an airport that is not connected to the city, which means both subway and infrastructure works will be realized fast in the region.”<sup>137</sup>.*

<sup>137</sup> <http://www.aksam.com.tr/ekonomi/bolge-arazilerin-fiyati-havalimani-gelmeden-uctu/haber-230114>

Arnavutköy Land Office informed that the land prices had increased upto a range between 70-80 thousand TL and 500 thousand TL after the location of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport to be built in Istanbul became clear. It was determined that land prices had increased by 22% during 2010-2011 and by 59% during 2011-2012<sup>138</sup>.

Land prices in Eyüp District increased by 41%<sup>139</sup>.

There is no land for sale left in Çatalca and Terkos; the number of the real estate brokerage houses exceeded 1000 in the region where the official number of the real estate agents is 138<sup>140</sup>.

The total amount of the lands in the area that have been passed into other hands by being bought dirt cheap from the villagers within the last 8 years, how many times the lands have been passed into other hands, which people, institutions, companies, media organizations or firms are the real buyers who made the mass land purchases is unknown. The villagers whose only means of living is stockbreeding started to bring lawsuits against TOKİ, because the TOKİ Commission appraised a price of 22 TL per m2 for the village lands within the scope of expropriation in the region where land prices soared up to 400 TL per m2 with mass purchases.

## **9.2. The Suspension of the Land Speculation Investigation / the Release of the Interim Injunction on Estates**

Upon the corruption scandal that burst out on December 17, 2013 and the 2nd wave operation afterwards on December 27, 2013, the data concerning the lands' being collected by media organizations and the companies in the Consortium that won the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport tender and the complaint petitions of the regional villagers about the land pelf were to be inspected and investigated by the auditors of the General Directorate of Real Estate, but it all remained inconclusive with the government's stopping the investigations.

In interim injunction was imposed on the estates of the owners of Kalyon and Cengiz Construction Companies that are in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport Consortium within the scope of the second wave operation on December 27, 2013. While many Ministers of the Government claimed that the corruption operation was a conspiracy against the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport to stop them, the Minister of Finance, Mr. Mehmet Şimşek said, "*...if the injunction is not revoked, the construction of that airport will be seriously imperiled*". And the injunction was revoked on January 13, 2014!

## **9.3. The Formation of the Pool Media and Other Unlawfulnesses**

Kalyon Construction Company that is in the Consortium that won the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport tender and had never had an investment in the media sector, bought ATV-Sabah on December 20, 2013 (that had been previously bought for 1.1 billion usd by Çalık Holding) through Zirve Holding founded in August with a 380-million TL capital. Amongst the "technical surveillance" information within the scope of the corruption operations reflected in the press were; that

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<sup>138</sup> Elif Tuğba Gürkan; Arkitera 30.07.2013 <http://www.arkitera.com/haber/16252/3-havalimani-arazi-fiyatlarini-ucurdu>

<sup>139</sup> ibid.

<sup>140</sup> <http://www.diken.com.tr/9-soruda-ucuncu-havalimani-projesi/>



Kalyon bought ATV-Sabah by command of the then Prime Minister Mr. Erdoğan, but because it couldn't afford to do this, a "pool" was formed by the former Minister of Transportation, Mr. Binali Yıldırım together with the other businessmen who won the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport and 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge tenders with a promise of pay-back later on; that the owner of Limak, Mr. Özdemir put 120 million usd and the owner of Cengiz Construction Company, Mr. Mehmet Cengiz transferred an amount of nearly 100 million usd by taking loans from Ziraat Bank and Halk Bank (State Banks) into the pool.

The fact that Mr. Nihat Özdemir (Limak) who was being tried in a court for bid rigging placed a bid in the tender<sup>141</sup> was brought up to the agenda of the Grand National Assembly. CHP (The Republican People's Party) Istanbul Parliamentarian, Mr. Aykut Erdoğan asked the Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications, Mr. Lütfi Elvan whether he knew about the ongoing trial of Mr. Nihat Özdemir who was one of the partners of the Consortium that won the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project's tender, for making a sweetheart agreement, bid rigging and committing a crime on behalf of a crime syndicate and helping the crime syndicate knowingly and willfully, at Ankara 11th High Criminal Court with the docket no 2008/113 at the time he gave an offer for the tender on behalf of the joint undertaking.

Erdoğan asked the following questions in the parliamentary question letter that he submitted to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey for the Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications to answer:

*Isn't it against the Public Tender Act numbered 4734 that someone against whom a public prosecution is going on, demanding his punishment for the charge of bid rigging, to give an offer on behalf of the joint undertaking at the tender? How did the Administration let this happen?*

*Pursuant to the implementing agreement, the incumbent company has a liability for founding a new incorporated company. And the Articles of Incorporation of this company has to be approved by the Administration. On what date was the new incorporated company established? Was the establishment announced in the Commercial Registry Gazette? On what date was it announced? What is the name of this company? On what date was the Articles of Incorporation of the new company approved by the Administration?*

*On what date did the Incumbent Company ask for the site delivery for the first stage of the Istanbul 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project from the Administration and on what date was the site delivery done by the Administration?*

*What is the equity capital liability of the incumbent company?*

*How many meters is the elevation (grade) of the airport from the sea level in average? Is the reduction of this elevation being considered?*

*In the case of the grade being decreased, will the tender be renewed?*

*What are the total fixed investment amounts per stage and the rent payments that the incumbent company will make to the Administration?*

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<sup>141</sup> [http://www.yapi.com.tr/haberler/3-havalimani-meclis-gundeminde\\_125124.html](http://www.yapi.com.tr/haberler/3-havalimani-meclis-gundeminde_125124.html)

*What kind of taxes will be paid through this rental? Will the taxes and other state withholdings be covered by the incumbent company? Will the stoppage through the rental be done? To whom will this stoppage belong?*

The grade of the airport, as we explained under the respective title, was decreased after the tender and the State was damaged<sup>142</sup>.

#### 9.4. The Other Environmental Pillages and Human Rights Violations of the Consortium Members

##### MAPA (MNG) - Kavak HPP (Hydroelectric Power Plant)-Artvin HPP<sup>143</sup>



Figure 15. Kavak HPP constructed within the city. Source: <http://www.sendika.org/2014/08/kavak-hes-icin-acele-el-koymaya-durdurma>.

One of the projects of MNG in Arhavi is the 14-megawatt Kavak-HPP project, which is known to the public opinion as the “Crazy HPP”. The reason why it is defined as crazy is because the project will be constructed within a residential area, furthermore, which is a densely populated one! This way the right to live in a healthy environment is being violated. Additionally, the side of the stream and its waterfront in the area is an important socialization place for the local community and it will be destroyed as a result of the stream’s drying up in consequence of the HPP project, thus the local people will be deprived of a significant public area where they meet up, see each other and spend time together.

On the other hand, the unlawfulnesses and corruptions in the project still continue. Besides such corruptions as the sap calculation’s being shown wrongly during the EIA process, the construction of the bridge that was built for the project in Kemerköprü Village by one of MNG’s subcontractors continued in an unauthorized and unlicensed way and in spite of the court decision, it could only be demolished after 9 months.

<sup>142</sup> <http://tr.turvet.com/main/3-havalimani-insaatinda-buyuk-vurgun-iddiasi>

<sup>143</sup> <http://www.birgun.net/news/view/mng-yangindan-mal-kaciriyor/2993> ; <https://tr-tr.facebook.com/ArhaviHeseHayr> ; <http://ia601501.us.archive.org/23/items/KT20150213/KT20150213.mp3>

The expert who examined the EIA Report determined lawlessness on 7 separate points. The most important of these is the one concerning how much sap should be left. In the sap calculation, the stream should be sectioned transversally; however the company in question sectioned the upper places where the valley is narrower instead of sectioning the stream where the project will have impact on, thus showed the effect as low. In addition to this, another example for the unlawfulness is that the excavation and dumping areas of the project have not been specified. It demonstrates that the General Directorate of Environmental Impact Assessment of the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization as well as the Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks who approved the sap did not do their jobs of inspection that the EIA Report was first approved despite all such unlawfulnesses.

When the Kavak HPP project came to the fore for the first time in 2012, the villagers organized a resistance by pitching tents, which lasted a whole 5 months from May to October. Even though the opposition and struggle, which the company tried to break with bribes, faded for a moment, it strongly continues today. Once the company started the construction in March 2014, the resistance tents were pitched again in June. The Rize Administrative Court suspended the execution in August 2014; and revoked the EIA Report in September. The company prepared a new EIA and submitted it to the Ministry in November; the decision has not been issued yet.

#### **MAPA (MNG) - Kamilet Valley – The Middle HPP<sup>144</sup>**



Figure 16. Kamilet Valley. Source: <http://www.bianet.org/bianet/toplum/156872-kamilet-te-izinsiz-hes-yoluna-ceza>.

According to the report prepared by Çoruh University, the Kamilet Valley should be taken under conservation, because it is not only one of Turkey's most important basins in terms of biological diversity with almost 1100 plant taxons in it, but also one of the biggest intact natural ecosystems. Kamilet is within "Caucasus Hotspot" that is one of the richest areas in the world in terms of biological diversity and at the same time one of the most important 34 Terrestrial Ecological Areas under threat. And what will slaughter this paradise is the

<sup>144</sup> <http://www.bianet.org/bianet/toplum/156872-kamilet-te-izinsiz-hes-yoluna-ceza>

Medium Regulator and Hydroelectric Power Plant (HPP) project of MNG Group's BALSU Electricity Production and Trading Inc.

The company that doesn't recognize law started the HPP road construction against the construction zoning law under the name of "drilling transportation road" for the HPP and continued its construction although it was stopped by Artvin Special Provincial Directorate of Administration. Upon the denunciation of the Arhavi Nature Conservation Platform, Artvin Special Provincial Directorate of Administration demanded for a second time the red-tagging of the HPP road that was constructed irregularly in the Kamilet Valley and the Medium-HPP road was stopped. The development plans of the Medium HPP that MNG wants to build have been approved. Arhavi Nature Conservation Platform will start the judicial process.

### **CENGİZ- Ilisu Dam and the threat of submerging the unique historical heritage Hasankeyf underwater with Hydroelectric Power Plant (HPP)**

Among the projects of the construction company Cengiz Holding whose projects are against nature, culture and life, there is a very exceptional area that will also be affected. The ten thousand year old ancient city Hasankeyf, built on the banks of the Tigris river in the Batman province and declared a natural protection area in 1981, is threatened by the Ilisu Dam and HPP projects that will submerge close to a hundred settlements, countless historical monuments and about 60 mounds, while displacing 15 thousand people by affecting their lives directly, and another 40 thousand by affecting them indirectly. The project will also inundate 6000 hectares of farm land.



Figure 17. General view of Hasankeyf. Source: <http://bianet.org/bianet/ekoloji/140589-koylulerbaraj-ustunde-jet-ski-mi-yapacak>



Seeing that Hasankeyf<sup>145</sup>, the only place in the world that meets the 9 out of 10 World Heritage criteria of UNESCO, was under threat, the local authorities, NGOs and professional chambers mobilized and founded The Initiative to Keep Hasankeyf Alive. The initiative led various international campaigns. The NGO named WEED (World Economy, Ecology and Development) that was a part of one of these campaigns had listed the environmental threats of the project as follows<sup>146</sup>:

- Destruction of the food supplies and habitats of endangered animal species,
- Mass fish mortality
- Sedimentation and eutrophication
- Significant drop in water quality
- Increase in waterborne diseases such as malaria
- Increase in conflicts over water (especially between Turkey and neighboring countries)

The Turkish State Council 14th Chamber had ordered a stay of execution of the Prime Ministry mandate that was signed by the then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and published on April 4, 2012 to ensure that the Ilisu Dam project would proceed rapidly and be exempt from an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)<sup>147</sup>.

The Ilisu Dam Project that will imprint the infamous name of Cengiz Holding in collective memory continues while the construction works of the new settlements for the local community who will be displaced by the project are still going on. On the other hand, the relocation site takes into account neither the cultural values nor the daily practices of the concerned population, violating relevant human rights

### **CENGİZ - Karabiga Cenal Power Plant<sup>148</sup>**

Irregularities have begun to arise in the 2-billion usd thermal power plant project that businessman Mehmet Cengiz whose name has very often come to the fore recently with alleged bribery and corruption started the construction of in Çanakkale's Karabiga town together with Alarko.

After the environmentalists had had the EIA positive decisions revoked, the firms tried this time dividing the project into 4 and getting a separate EIA positive decision for each, thus having resorted to another corruption of disguising the cumulative impact of the projects. And they persisted on their massacre of nature. On the other hand, environmentalists keep up their struggle to have a suspension of the execution decision for each EIA positive report taken. A combat, so to say, is going on between the firm and the environmentalists for Cenal Power Plant under the partnership of Cengiz Construction Co. and Alarko Group.

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<sup>145</sup> <http://www.dogadernegi.org/hasankeyf-tasinmak-istemiyor.aspx>

<sup>146</sup> <http://www.weed-online.org/111188.html>

<sup>147</sup> [http://www.zaman.com.tr/gundem\\_ilisu-barajina-danistay-freni\\_2039800.html](http://www.zaman.com.tr/gundem_ilisu-barajina-danistay-freni_2039800.html)

<sup>148</sup> <http://www.kuzeyormanlari.org/2014/11/23/canakkalede-yapilasma-bulunmayan-koylara-11-yeni-termik-santral-projesi/> ; <http://www.istegundem.com/haber/Talan-%E2%80%98ticari-sir-oldu/48429>

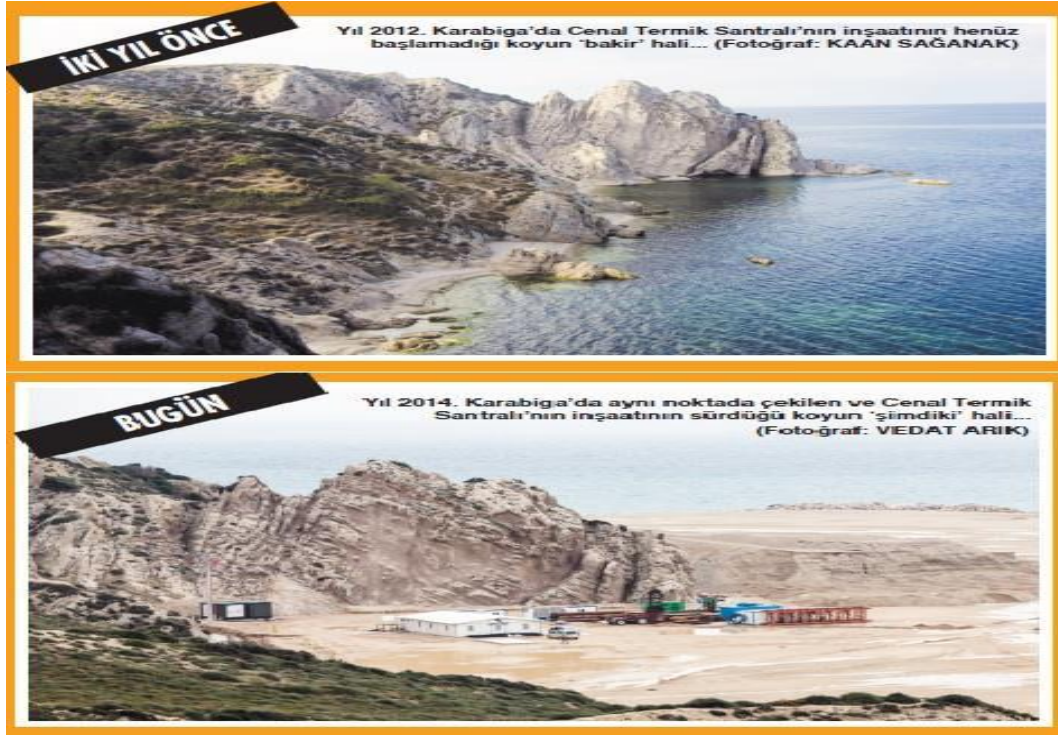


Figure 18. The Destruction of environment and nature that Karabiga and Cenal Thermal Power Plant has caused within two years.

Besides that, President of Karabiga Clean Nature Association, Ms. Aslı Badem stated that despite the circulars of the General Directorate of Forestry, Balıkesir Directorate of Forestry approved the construction of the ash storage area of the plant in the forestland and tried to hide this from public opinion on the excuse of its being a “trade secret”. It is also claimed that Alarko and Cengiz partnership continued their excavation work in the region until the month June of last year even though they had no license whatsoever.

In the last report of the project whose EIA Reports were returned twice, this time, there is a Mediterranean Monk Seal and Caretta Caretta scandal. Upon the opening of the EIA Report that was prepared for the third time to the views and suggestions of official institutions, the Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks of the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs made the warning that the area where the power plant will be constructed is very close to the biotopes of Mediterranean Monk Seals and sea turtle species<sup>149</sup>. The Mediterranean Monk Seals were zeroized by Cengiz Holding that hid them in the official documents to be able to get the administrative permissions. Cengiz Holding said, “*There is no area under protection in compliance with the Bern Convention (Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats) in or in the vicinity of the Project field*”. However the Mediterranean Monk Seals zeroized by Cengiz Holding were found by the researchers from METU (Middle East Technical University)<sup>150</sup>.

<sup>149</sup> <http://www.birgun.net/news/view/cengiz-holding-simdi-de-foklari-sifirlayacak/8010>

<sup>150</sup> <http://www.birgun.net/news/view/cengizin-sifirladigi-foklari-odtu-buldu/8140>



## CENGİZ – Mining in the World Paradise Cerattepe<sup>151</sup>

In Artvin, Cerrattepe that has one of the oldest and richest vegetations on earth<sup>152</sup>, no permission was granted by jurisdiction for the copper mine of Eti Copper Operations belonging to Cengiz Holding. The ruling of Rize Administrative Court made the community dwellers breathe a sigh of relief, however the watch and guard duty will continue, which started to prevent the tree-cutting in the Kafkasör Plateau until the Project is cancelled.

## LİMAK – A Life and Death Situation at the Limak Holding Dam<sup>153</sup>

While picnicking, 6 people drowned to death in the flooding water as a result of the dam hatch's sudden opening at the Alkumru Dam constructed on the Botan Brook in Siirt by Limak Holding, tens of citizens got injured. According to Siirt Bar Association, *"Initially the first hatch should open up, after a certain while passes the second hatch should open up, not all of them at the same time. After a while passes after the opening of the second hatch, the third one should open and this should be conducted in a controlled way. The warning signs should have been checked at regular intervals"*<sup>154</sup>.



Figure 19. A Life and Death Situation in Botan, source:  
<http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/27075866.asp>.

## LİMAK – Doesn't Recognize Law at Peri Brook<sup>155</sup>

Because of the Hydroelectric Power Plants that are currently at either operation or construction stages, the ecosystem of Peri Valley has been severely damaged, various types of flora and fauna have been negatively affected and in broad sense, nonrecoverable

<sup>151</sup> [http://www.radikal.com.tr/cevre/cerattepe\\_kurtuldu\\_yuzlerce\\_artvinli\\_sokaga\\_dokuldu-1235951](http://www.radikal.com.tr/cevre/cerattepe_kurtuldu_yuzlerce_artvinli_sokaga_dokuldu-1235951)

<sup>152</sup> The right to live: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6AuMIITMuY>

<sup>153</sup> <http://www.birgun.net/news/view/limak-holdingin-barajinda-can-pazari/4387>

<sup>154</sup> <http://meldaonur.net/?p=4635> : Parliamentarian Ms. Melda Onur's Parliamentary Question;  
[http://article.wn.com/view/2014/08/24/Siirtte\\_piknikciler\\_sular\\_alt\\_nda\\_kald/](http://article.wn.com/view/2014/08/24/Siirtte_piknikciler_sular_alt_nda_kald/)

<sup>155</sup> <http://www.birgun.net/news/view/-peri-suyunda-savas-hukuku-suruyor/1160>;  
<http://www.tuncelinin sesi.com/haber/baraj-ve-hesler-icin-devlet-denetlemeye-basvuru-6469.htm>

damages have been caused. Besides the violations of the right to environment, the projects constructed at the Peri Brook where there are local community's important faith centers and visiting points also violate human rights, the cultural rights being in the first place.



Figure 20. Peri Brook that the projects made drouthy, Source:  
<http://www.tuncelininsesi.com/haber/baraj-ve-hesler-icin-devlet-denetlemeye-basvuru-6469.htm>.

### **LİMAK - Pembelik Dam**

The construction of the Pembelik Dam planned to be built by Limak-Bilgin Holdings partnership on Peri Brook that is one of the tributaries of Fırat River that defines the borders of Elazığ, Tunceli and partially Bingöl continues, ignoring the law despite the suspension of the execution decision of the State Council and thus the pillage of nature still goes on. The State Council suspended the 'urgent expropriation decisions' issued for the Project in early June, however the 'urgent expropriations' did not stop despite the decision of the State Council; the construction is going on.

Lawyer Mr. Mehmet Horuř who interprets the situation as laws of war said that they were making preparations to go to the Constitutional Court.

### **LİMAK - Seyrantepe Dam**

Even though Nazimiye villagers showed their reactions against the dams by protests and demonstrations with tents for years, Limak and Bilgin Holdings Partnership that won the second dam tender at Peri Brook too constructed the Seyrantepe Dam after the Pembelik Dam. The villagers who opposed the construction of Pembelik and Seyrantepe Dams continuously encountered with the obstructiveness and preventions of both the military police and the jurisdiction. While many villagers were taken into custody, many people are either jailed pending trial or released pending trial with tens of years of prison sentence.

The villagers who live in Peri Valley state that with the closing of the dam hatches, all living creatures in the lower part of the stream flow, especially the fish have disappeared; the fish remaining in the hole-areas have been pillaged by both humans and predatory animals;

while viruses increase in the stream that cannot flow, when the water is released, the plants and animals in the lower parts benefitting from the water are seriously damaged by this.

Along the valley, the crossing of the villages that are across each other has been completely obstructed. The citizens who live in two different villages that are across each other on the two sides of the stream state that they have to cover long distances and walk for hours to visit each other. While the relationship between these villages has been severed because of the dam, the habitants of Gölek Village that is located in between Pembelik and Seyrantepe live a life as if they were hostages. The villagers have to travel with the rafts that they have built with their own means; and they barely escape drowning. Additionally, the villagers say that it causes them huge trouble to take the sick and the elderly to the doctor<sup>156</sup>.

### **KOLİN – The termly ambition for more profit: Public Prosecution**

The judicial process has not left Mr. Celal Koloğlu who is the owner of Kolin Construction Company in peace, which started seven years ago following the fuel smuggling operation at the port he operated and is based on an extensive bill of indictment including charges ranging from false documents to bribery and from polluting the environment to fuel smuggling. Celal Koloğlu was taken into custody and then released following the operation, however he was put on trial in high criminal court during the criminal case initiated and sentenced for more than one crime. Following these sentences that were revoked –on very interesting grounds- at the Supreme Court of Appeal phase, the prosecution is still continuing in Çanakkale<sup>157</sup>.

### **KOLİN - Yırca**



<sup>156</sup> <http://www.birgun.net/news/view/peri-suyunda-baraj-hayati-yok-ediyor/1276>

<sup>157</sup> [http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/koseyazisi/143717/Kolin\\_in\\_Fazla\\_Kazanc\\_Hirsi\\_Dava\\_Dosyasinda.html](http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/koseyazisi/143717/Kolin_in_Fazla_Kazanc_Hirsi_Dava_Dosyasinda.html)

Figure 21. “Bitter News from Yırca” <http://www.ntv.com.tr/arsiv/id/25550853>.

The resistance of the villagers in the Yırca Village of Manisa, Soma against the fact that Kolin wanted to pillage the olive groves and build a thermal power plant instead yielded results; the villagers who resisted for weeks were even exposed to the attacks of Kolin’s private security guards. The State Council suspended the execution of the thermal power plant that Kolin was planning to construct<sup>158</sup>. The company had already slaughtered 6666 20-year-old olive trees by uprooting them in the olive groves that it entered unlawfully<sup>159</sup>.

As stated by Greenpeace Lawyer Deniz Bayram, many unlawfulnesses regarding the thermal power plant that is wanted to be built in Yırca have been revealed through the applications of Greenpeace for the acquisition of information. Even though Manisa Provincial Directorate of Agriculture disapproved and didn’t grant permission for the construction of a thermal power plant in this area in compliance with the legislations because it is an olive groves land, it came to light that the Ministry of Agriculture and Manisa Provincial Directorate of Food, Agriculture and Livestock were not included in the EIA process and also the villagers didn’t know about the EIA process<sup>160</sup>. Kolin massacred the olive trees in a lawless way without even a construction license and without having taken the legal permits required for it to be able to start the construction work. It had its private security guards attack and batter the people of Yırca who opposed. The letter written by Manisa Provincial Directorate of Agriculture and sent to Soma District Governorship for the prevention of the olive-tree-cutting that had been done many times before stated that necessary measurements had to be taken for the olive trees not to be uprooted; nevertheless it was ignored! The villagers and Greenpeace made a denunciation against the company.

### **KALYON - Taksim Project**

The Taksim Pedestrianization Project constructed by Kalyon Construction Company is a project which has been finance by Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality. The project was prepared in order to take Taksim’s vehicular traffic underground into the tunnels and expand the square and also to build the old artillery barracks again to be used as shopping mall, hotel and residence in Gezi Park. This way, while there is already a green-field shortage in the city center, an important part of Gezi Park that is one of the last green-fields will have been destroyed. As for the rest of Gezi Park, the public, except for the consumers, will have been prevented from using it because the barracks will remain in the middle of the shopping mall. Lawsuits were brought against the project that drew enormous reaction because of the negative effects of the shopping mall to be built on the areal culture and craftsmen and shopkeepers<sup>161</sup>.

The attempt of Kalyon Construction Company to unlawfully cut the trees in Gezi Park ignited the wick of Gezi resistance on the night of May 27, 2013.

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<sup>158</sup> <http://www.sendika.org/2014/11/yircada-santrale-yurutmeyi-durdurma-kolin-karari-haber-alip-katletti-iddiasi/>

<sup>159</sup> Videos regarding the subject. <http://www.greenpeace.org/turkey/tr/news/somada-zeytinlik-kiyimi/>

<sup>160</sup> <http://www.greenpeace.org/turkey/tr/news/yircadaki-zeytinlikler-tamamen-kesildi-071114/>

<sup>161</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taksim\\_Square](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taksim_Square)

Istanbul 1st Administrative Court revoked on June 6, 2013 the plans scaled 1/5000 and 1/1000 that were the basis for the project whose square design's first part was completed and thus the project was cancelled too. However the construction was completed and Taksim tunnels were opened on September 13, 2013.



## 10. AND THE HUMAN: “When the last lime tree is cut...”



Figure 22. From the settlements within the project field: “I have no place to go, I will become homeless. Please don’t demolish my place”.

Because of the construction work going on in the villages remaining within the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project and its impact area, stockbreeding is about to end, fish species die out and landslides occur. The life security of the villagers cannot be provided because of the 24-hour heavy traffic of the trucks and caterpillars, and young students cannot go to their schools in the villages by foot. Frequent power outages make life difficult for the villagers and have become an element of oppression for the villagers to migrate from this region. On the other hand, based on the news reflected in the press at different times and the interviews held with the villagers, various oppressions are practiced; even astronomical fines are issued to the villagers because of the goats entering the project field<sup>162</sup>!

On page 317 of the EIA Report, the personal lands to be expropriated have been specified as 2, 47%. On the other hand, it is now impossible for the villagers whose living means and resources have been taken away, even though their houses haven’t been taken away yet, to shelter here in these villages where the ponds have been filled and living creatures have been destroyed; the trees have been cut and the land has been made a desert; the agricultural lands and meadows have been opened to constructional activities; and life has been rendered unbearable because of all the dust, noise, vehicle traffic and such stemming from the construction.

The local community who has been settled in their ancestors’ lands for decades have established a living space here. However, the EIA Report (pg: 314) evaluates a living space as just a commercial field or a piece of land, merely based on economic indicators and rent, from the point of view that “...there will be a rise in value of the real estates around the

<sup>162</sup> <http://www.kuzeyormanlari.org/2015/03/01/keciden-de-inatci-rant-ucuncu-havalimani-arazisine-giren-kecinin-sahibine-7-bin-lira-ceza/>



*airport*". Due to this attitude that focuses on rent instead of human, the local community is suffering human rights violations and a series of unjust treatments.

This series of mistreats and sufferings where the main stream media has been playing ostrich and which is tried to escape from the public opinion's notice has been reflected in the interviews held by Northern Forests Defense (NFD) during its visits to Odayeri, Ağaçlı, Akpınar and Yeniköy Villages located within the impact area of the project on January 12, 2014<sup>163</sup>. The villager has told about the negative impacts of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Airport project on nature and life as well as the oppressions for expropriation.

Grandpa Hadji İsmail's heart couldn't stand this pillage; having pointed to the 30-year-old lime tree in his garden, he had said, *"They can't pay me the worth of this"*<sup>164</sup>: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AZnkiakc488&feature=youtube\\_gdata](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AZnkiakc488&feature=youtube_gdata)

Let's add, continuing with Grandpa Hadji İsmail's words: *When the last lime tree is cut...what will Istanbul have turned into?*

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<sup>163</sup> When the last lime tree is cut: The name of the rural pillage is 3. Airport; Açık Radio, The Dust of the City Program: <http://acikradio.com.tr/default.aspx?mv=a&aid=32499>

<sup>164</sup> <http://www.kuzeyormanlari.org/2014/03/21/ismail-dedenin-evi-istimlak-ediliyor/>

## EPILOGUE

What has been written here is the story of Istanbul, with its water basins, forests, agricultural lands and meadows to be pillaged; with its wildlife, flora, endemic plants, insects and birds to be destroyed; and with the air pollution, malignant diseases, traffic and noise that extort the right of the people of Istanbul to live in a healthy environment. And because this story will affect the whole country, what has been written here is your story!

What has been written here is a country's drifting off the course of law and justice with its EIA that cannot disguise the enormous size of the pillage while it also doesn't fail to approve the project with its fraud, its ruse, its tender, its oppression, its violation of rights and its process far away from being transparent.

What has been written here is the destruction of the virtues such as respect for life, responsibility for next generations, morality and honesty against rent and money; with the projects of violation of the right to live healthily, with the projects each of which is shadier than the other, with the projects of nature pillage, corruption, fraud, lies and plunders.

Either the story may end like this,

Or, it is in our hands to write another story!

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