

Gökova Bay

Ways to Explore & Protect



Gökova Bay

Located between the districts of Bodrum and Marmaris in Muğla city, in southwestern Türkiye. This is a region of magnificent natural beauty and biodiversity. The area boasts a rich ecosystem and natural habitats, hosting endemic species of the Mediterranean Basin. Approximately 73% of all fish species recorded in Turkish waters inhabit Gökova Bay.

Designated as a Special Environmental Protection Area since 1988 due to its rich fauna and flora, the Bay holds high ecological importance. Furthermore, in 2010, "No Fishing Zones" were established to support the conservation and increase of marine species populations, leading to the closure of the entire Bay to commercial fishing. Currently, Akbük Port, Akyaka, Boncuk Cove, Bördübet Port, Çamlı Port, İngiliz Port, and Löngöz Cove are all restricted areas for all fishing activities.

You can explore this magnificent region in harmony with nature and the local community without causing harm to the environment!

Mediterranean Monk Seal



Gökova Bay is also one of the habitats of the endangered Mediterranean monk seal. It is known that there are fewer than 1000 of these seals worldwide, with around 100 of them living along the coasts of Türkiye. This rare and endangered species is a native resident of the waters of Gökova. Suitable caves are found in the region for the species to rest and give birth to their pups.

The historic Carian Trail, one of Türkiye's longest hiking routes, takes its name from the ancient Caria region.

Carian Trail

Boncuk Cove is one of the rare breeding grounds for endangered Sandbar sharks in the Mediterranean. Due to this characteristic, it is among the Important Shark & Ray Areas (ISRAs).

Sandbar Shark



Therefore, in 2010, Boncuk Cove was declared one of the seven "No Fishing Zones" in Gökova Bay.

Seagrasses are an important part of coastal ecosystems, providing habitat for numerous organisms.

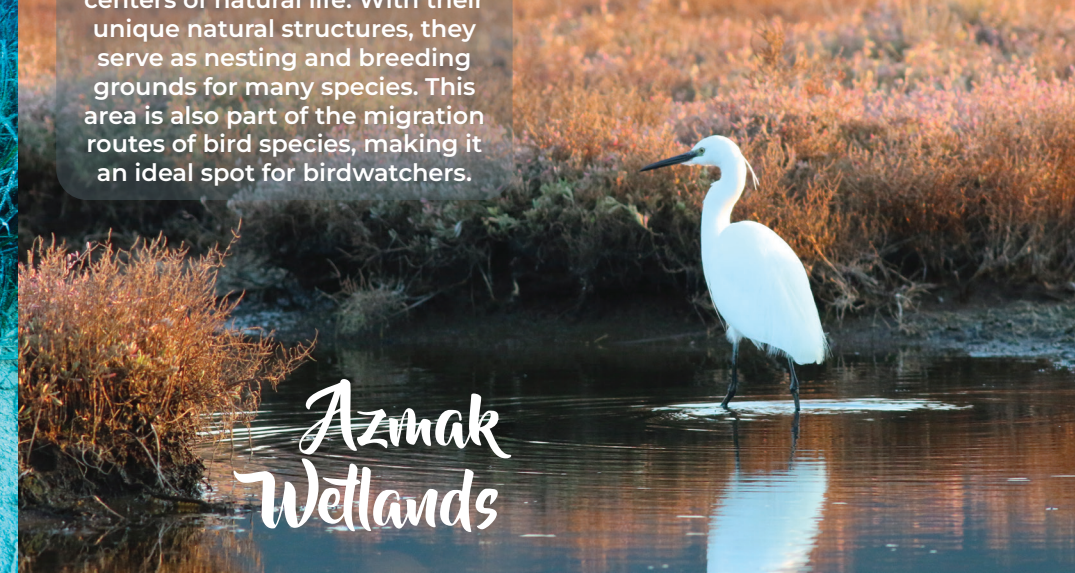
- They are the "lungs" of our seas, producing oxygen through photosynthesis. Approximately one out of every two breaths we take comes from seagrasses!
- They are among the plants with the highest carbon storage capacity worldwide.
- They create environments for fish and other marine organisms to shelter, feed, and reproduce.
- They prevent erosion in the sea by their roots.

Seagrass Meadows



The surroundings of the Kadın and Akçapınar Streams, located in Gökova Bay, are important wetland areas and one of the centers of natural life. With their unique natural structures, they serve as nesting and breeding grounds for many species. This area is also part of the migration routes of bird species, making it an ideal spot for birdwatchers.

Azmak Wetlands



Otter

Gökova Bay is one of the rare areas where otters are found.



Small-scale Fishers



While exploring Gökova Bay, you can also meet the small-scale fishers living in the region. These fishers sustain their livelihood from the sea using traditional methods and represent the rich culture related to the region's marine products.

Sedir Island

Located within Gökova Bay, Sedir Island hosts both natural and cultural heritage. Known as Kedrai in ancient times, this island is rich not only in cultural heritage, with historical ruins such as an ancient theater and Cleopatra's Beach, but also in biodiversity.



Mediterranean Conservation Society

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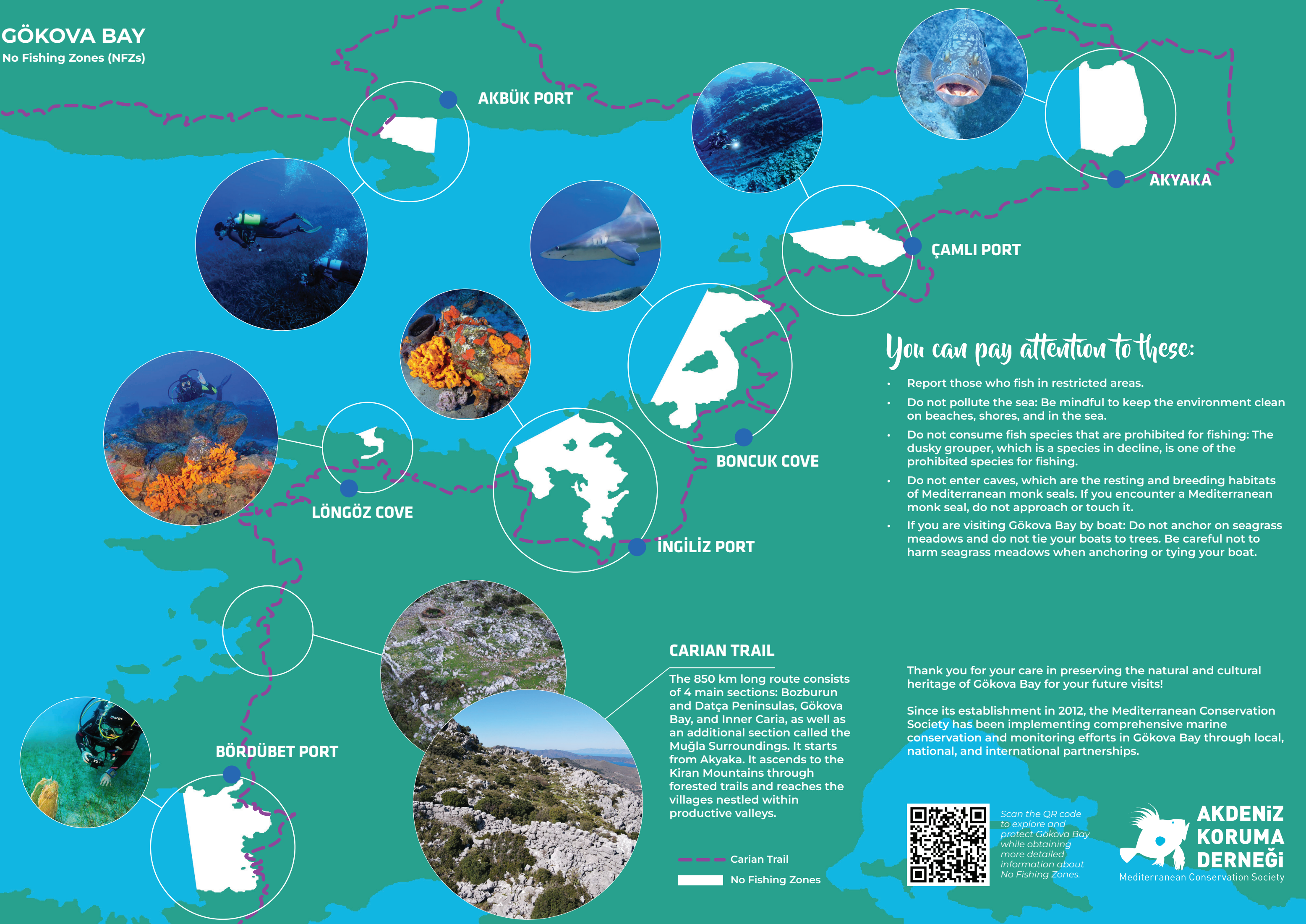
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GÖKOVA BAY

No Fishing Zones (NFZs)



You can pay attention to these:

- Report those who fish in restricted areas.
- Do not pollute the sea: Be mindful to keep the environment clean on beaches, shores, and in the sea.
- Do not consume fish species that are prohibited for fishing: The dusky grouper, which is a species in decline, is one of the prohibited species for fishing.
- Do not enter caves, which are the resting and breeding habitats of Mediterranean monk seals. If you encounter a Mediterranean monk seal, do not approach or touch it.
- If you are visiting Gökova Bay by boat: Do not anchor on seagrass meadows and do not tie your boats to trees. Be careful not to harm seagrass meadows when anchoring or tying your boat.

CARIAN TRAIL

The 850 km long route consists of 4 main sections: Bozburun and Datça Peninsulas, Gökova Bay, and Inner Caria, as well as an additional section called the Muğla Surroundings. It starts from Akyaka. It ascends to the Kiran Mountains through forested trails and reaches the villages nestled within productive valleys.

- Carian Trail
- No Fishing Zones

Thank you for your care in preserving the natural and cultural heritage of Gökova Bay for your future visits!

Since its establishment in 2012, the Mediterranean Conservation Society has been implementing comprehensive marine conservation and monitoring efforts in Gökova Bay through local, national, and international partnerships.



Scan the QR code to explore and protect Gökova Bay while obtaining more detailed information about No Fishing Zones.

