

The effects of sand-dune afforestation in the Sinop Region on economic and social life

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Abstract: Sand-dune afforestations have significant effects on economic and social life as well as benefits such as stopping soil erosion, securing settlements and access roads, participating in production of empty and inefficient areas, correcting the degraded ecosystem balance and ensuring the continuity of some endemic plants. Investigation of these effects will further enhance the importance of sand-dune afforestations. Therefore, in this study; the effects of sand-dune afforestations carried out between 1975 and 1981 in the Sinop (Sarıköy) region, which is an example of Turkey's sand-dune afforestation history, on economic and social life were multidimensional examined. For this purpose, firstly the sand-dune afforestation in Turkey were briefly explained, and its amount in the Sinop region, the species used, planting and maintenance studies and methods, plantation costs, growing and success conditions of species were determined. For this, the relevant literature was used, the records of the forestry institutions were utilized, and observations and determinations on the fields were made. Additionally, semi-structured talks were held with 25 local people about economic and social life before and after sand-dune afforestation. The obtained data were evaluated by a logical analysis and synthesis, and some findings were visualized with figures and photographs. Based on the data, status of sand-dune fields before and after afforestation was compared with the growing and success of the used species. The impacts of sand-dune afforestation on the agriculture and livestock works of local people in the region, employment and migration prevention and therefore economic and social life were determined. According to the findings, until the 1975s, the villagers of the Sarıkum Lake side lived in highland in the summer months because they could not shelter in their villages due to the sand-dune movement and only in the villages during the winter months when it slowed down. Since the sand-dune movement was stopped as a result of afforestation, the villagers settled in their villages by escaping nomadicity-shepherding and built houses, cages and stables in the villages. The number of literate, workers in jobs with social security, and the return of the retired villagers to their villages increased after the permanent settlement. They began to deal with the cultivation of agriculture, pasture crops, greenhouses, forestry work, local mushroom trade and fishing activities. Additionally, they reached spiritual peace because the grave sites have not disappeared by the prevention of sand-dune movements. On the other hand, positive contributions were made to Sinop-Ayancık road transportation due to sand-dune afforestation. Likewise, the number of visitors coming to see the area and the nature park has increased day by day and thus positive contributions were made to ecotourism because the area including Sarıkum village, Sarıkum Lake and sand-dune afforestation, and Subasar forest land were declared as a natural protection area in 1987. Thus, it was determined that economic and social life activated, employment opportunities and income level increased, migration was prevented, lifestyle changed, and positive contributions were made to many sectors (agriculture, animal husbandry, transportation, tourism etc.). According to the results, some proposals were developed about the effects of sand-dune afforestation on economic and social life and its importance.

Keywords: Sand-dune, Afforestation, Economic and social effect, Sarıkum, Sinop, Turkey.