Chapter 17

Mapping Landuse Impacts on Bezoar Goat (*Capra aegagrus*) Habitats in Fırtına Basin, Turkey

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ABSTRACT

*WWF-Turkey* implemented two different case studies in regions which have different ecosystems and socio-economic characteristics. The first case study was conducted in Fırtına Basin in a northeastern part of Turkey which is dominated by forest and where tea cultivation and tourism are the main income generation activities. The case study in Fırtına Basin was focused on conservation of the bezoar goat (*Capra aegagrus*) population in partnership with local stakeholders and the mapping created high interest among participants.

INTRODUCTION

The Fırtına Basin is situated on the northern skirts of the Eastern Black Sea mountain range which is the backbone of the West Lesser Caucasus corridor in Turkey (See Figure 1). The valley is formed around Fırtına River and its two main branches that carry the chilly waters of the Kaçkar Mountains down to the Black Sea. It is a typical example of a number of rapid flowing river systems along the Black Sea coast, which run in parallel towards the sea. The slopes of Fırtına Basin are among the steepest on earth (See Figure 2), reaching up to 3,992 m from sea level within 45 km. The average annual precipitation is fairly high (over 2,000 mm) and the higher altitudes are covered by wet clouds most of the time.

Fırtına Basin is one of the 9 Forest Hot Spots which was defined by WWF in Turkey. It has pristine temperate rain forests of the Caucasus