

# Cilician Basin Important Marine Mammal Area - IMMA

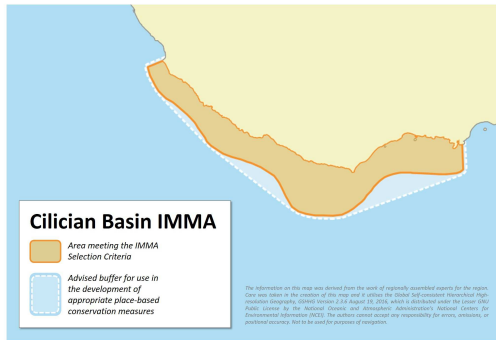
## Description

The area is contained within the 200m isobath in consideration of monk seals' neritic habits. The area contains caves with underwater entrances, which are suitable for Mediterranean monk seal resting and pupping. The geographic range is restricted to the areas where there have been systematic surveys, with some caves monitored with infrared camera. The proposed area starts from Gazipasa in the west to Tasucu in the east along the Turkish coast of the Mediterranean. Tourism and artisanal fisheries are important sources of local income.

The Mediterranean Monk Seal *Monachus monachus* (Hermann, 1779) is still widely distributed throughout coastal and insular parts of the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, Turkey. The most recent estimate for the population in Turkish water was 107 (Güçlüsoy et al., 2004), about 30 of which are thought to be resident in the Cilician Basin IMMA (Gücü & Ok, 2006).

Major threats to the species are a) habitat deterioration and loss by human coastal development, b) deliberate killing and accidental entanglement in fishing gear, c) decreased food availability due to overfishing, d) marine pollution and e) stochastic events, such as disease outbreaks.

Research on Mediterranean monk seals in the area started in the 1990s, where 11 pups have been observed from 1995 to 2001. Although a more recent figure is not available, the existence of suitable pupping caves and the finding of a pup stranded in 2016 (<http://www.sabah.com.tr/akdeniz/2016/09/27/yavru-akdeniz-fokunu-sevgiden-oldurduler>) suggest that pupping still occurs.



**Area Size**  
714 km<sup>2</sup>

## Qualifying Species and Criteria

Mediterranean monk seal -  
*Monachus monachus*  
Criterion A; C (i)

## Summary

The Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*) is one of the most endangered marine mammal species in the Mediterranean Sea. Pupping areas have been used as key factors to identify important areas for their conservation. The northern coast of the Cilician Basin, between Gazipasa and Tasucu on the Turkish coast, has been studied extensively with cave habitats being monitored by cameras. Individual seals have been identified as well as pups. The area extends outwards to the 200m isobath.

The area, including the pupping caves and surrounding foraging zone, have been designated as No Take Area and strictly protected by the Turkish law since 1997.

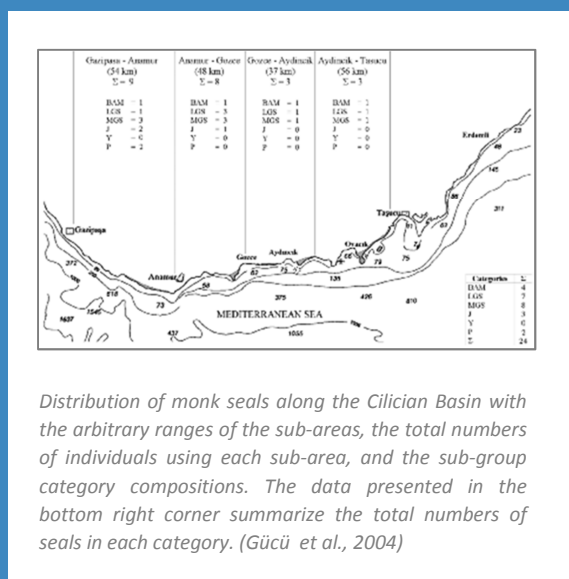
## Criterion A - Species or Population Vulnerability

The Mediterranean monk seal *Monachus monachus* is assessed as Endangered [EN C2a(i)] in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (Karamanlidis, A. & Dendrinis, P. 2015). The area has very important caves that the monk seals use for their resting and pupping. The survival of even small populations is crucial for the species. Gucu & Ok (2006) have identified 30 seals in the area, which is presumed to host 10% of the Mediterranean population, thought to consist of 350-400 individuals.

## Criterion C: Key Life Cycle Activities

### Sub-criterion Ci: Reproductive Areas

Based on observations of newborns and pups, and on the presence of caves suitable for pupping. Direct observation of pups is a good evidence and the area has been studied since 1990s (Gücü et al, 2004; Gücü and Ozturk 2014).



Distribution of monk seals along the Cilician Basin with the arbitrary ranges of the sub-areas, the total numbers of individuals using each sub-area, and the sub-group category compositions. The data presented in the bottom right corner summarize the total numbers of seals in each category. (Gücü et al., 2004)

## Supporting Information

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MARINE MAMMAL PROTECTED AREAS TASK FORCE



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PDF made available for download at  
<https://www.marinemammalhabitat.org/portfolio-item/cilician-basin/>

# Annex I

## List of Primary and Secondary Species

### Primary Species – Meet the IMMA Selection Criteria

Scientific Name	Common Name of Species	Population / Subpopulation Name	IUCN Red List Status
<i>Monachus monachus</i>	Mediterranean monk seal	Eastern Mediterranean subpopulation	Endangered

### Secondary Species – Do not individually meet the IMMA Selection Criteria but are present within the area

Scientific Name	Common Name of Species	Population / Subpopulation Name	IUCN Red List Status
NA	NA	NA	NA