

Strasbourg, 8 April 2014
[files28e_2014.docx]

T-PVS/Files (2014) 28

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

34th meeting
Strasbourg, 2-5 December 2014

Possible File

**THREAT TO THE MEDITERRANEAN MONK SEAL
(*MONACHUS MONACHUS*)
IN TURKEY**

REPORT BY THE GOVERNMENT

*Document prepared by
the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs, Turkey*

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY, MINISTRY OF FORESTRY AND WATER AFFAIRS
GOVERNMENT REPORT ON COMPLAINT ABOUT CONSTRUCTION
ACTIVITIES AROUND BALIKLI CAVE IN MERSIN, YESILOVACIK

It was stated in IMS-METU's report that the new-born monk seal pup was found dead on 28 February 2014 close to the construction site and the cause of death was malnutrition.

The necropsy mentioned in the complainant's report was carried out by specialists in Turkish Marine Research Association, together with IMS-METU and local branch of our ministry. Although main reason of death seems to be malnutrition, in the report it is stated that more investigations should be done to clarify the reason. The two holes on right side of the abdomen still need to be answered. This is suggestive of illegal fishing in the area.

Although we do not underestimate the necessity of suspending the construction activities, according to another report compiled by specialists who are responsible for monitoring the adverse effects of construction activities, there are more important problems than the construction activities in the area.

According to Prof. Yigit and his colleagues' report, fishing activities, especially fishing nets and harpoon fishing are more threatful to monk seals than the construction is.

We would like to state that the issue is still at the National Court and according to the requirements stated in Environmental Impact Assessment report, the construction activities were suspended during the period 1 September 2013 – 1 January 2014.

Nevertheless, our ministry will do its best to stop the construction activities at the site until the court reaches a final decision.