

## **SOUTHEASTERN ANATOLIA PROJECT(GAP) IN TURKEY AS A WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

DR.BULENT ACMA

Anadolu University, Department of Economics  
Unit of Southeastern Anatolia Project(GAP)  
26470 Eskisehir/TURKEY

(Tel: +90-222-3350580ext.6171, Fax: +90-222-3353616, e-mail: bacma@anadolu.edu.tr)

The Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP), one of the most important projects for develop remarkable natural resources of the world, is accepted as a change for getting benefit from rich water and agricultural resources of the Southeastern Anatolia Region.

The GAP Project has been considered as a regional development projects through years, but the dimensions of sustainability, protection of environment and participatory have been attached to the master of the project in recent years.

The GAP had originally started as an energy production and irrigation project seeking to utilize the rich land and water resources of the region. It was later converted into an integrated regional development project upon the completion of the GAP Master Plan in 1989. The Master Plan is an overall guide for the course that regional development will follow and for plans, programs and projects to be developed on more specific terms. The basic development scenario adopted by the Master Plan is to transform the region as a agriculture based industrial center.

When the GAP Project is completed, the Upper Mesopotomia, the centers of many civilisation, will re-again its importance as it had in the ancient times, and will be alive a center of civilisation. Moreover, when the problem of water shortage and water supplies in the world for the future is kept in mind, the importance of Southeastern Anatolia's water supplies will be doubled. For this reason, the GAP Project, developed by depending on water and natural resources of the region, will have an important place in the world.

At present, the GAP is a human centered and integrated regional development project carried out along with the principles of sustainable human development. The development envisaged under the GAP has the goal of creating opportunities for the people of the region fully materialize their preferences and economic potentials. Other than dams, hydroelectric plants and irrigation schemes over the rivers of Euphrates and Tigris, the concept of "Southeastern Anatolia Project" is conceived as a regional development drive aiming the multi-faceted and sustainable socio-economic development of the Region on the basis of a multi-sectoral and integrated approach which covers such diverse areas as urban, rural and agricultural infrastructure, transportation, industry, education, health, housing, tourism and investments in many other fields

The State Hydraulic Works (DSI) is engaged in the program for developing land and water resources in the region. The program consists of two parts each of them covering projects related to the basins of either the Euphrates or the Tigris(see appendices 4 and 5). The program envisages the construction of 22 dams, 19 hydraulic power plants and an irrigation system that will bring 1.7 million hectares of land under irrigation. Upon the completion of the project, 29 % of the total water potential of Turkey will be managed through the facilities on the Euphrates and the Tigris, which together flow more than 52.9

billion cubic meters of water a year. The planned irrigation area corresponds to 20 % of total irrigable land in Turkey and annual energy production to 22 % of total electric energy potential in Turkey

The GAP region extends over an area of 75,000 km<sup>2</sup> and a wide range of crops each requiring different climatic conditions are raised in this area including olive, pistachio, hazelnut and persimmon. The region has 3.2 million hectares of land fit for crop culture. Forested areas make up 1.3 million hectares while 2.3 million hectares of land consists of pastures and ranges.

The aim of this study is to introduce the region with rich natural resources and the GAP Project. For this reason, firstly, the natural potential of the region will be introduced. Second, The GAP Project will be presented in details. In the third stage, the projects being processed for protecting the natural sources and environment will be analyzed. In the last stage, strategies and policies to develop and to protect the natural resources of the region in short, mid, and long terms will be proposed.

**JEL Codes:** Q2, Q3, N55, O53

*Keywords:* Natural and Water Resources; Turkey; Southeastern Anatolia Region and Southeastern Anatolia Project(GAP)