

15 LIFE ON LAND



Biodiversity loss and land degradation are urgent global issues. Özyeğin University engages in ecological restoration projects, supports research on sustainable land management, and raises awareness through student-led initiatives and collaborations with environmental organizations.

4

Scholarly Publications
(2020-2024)

1.93

Citation Impact
(FWCI)

1

Funded
Projects

10

Student-Led
Activities

Communication Design Projects Focusing on Biodiversity

In the 2023-24 academic year, students in the Communication and Design Department produced creative works centered on water ecosystems and biodiversity. In the COD 301 Design Studio course "Making Films Following the Water," students produced films under the theme 'Istanbul and Water,' starting from the campus stream. The subjects explored ranged from fountains to aqueducts, from public baths to droughts, creating works in various genres such as documentary, animation, and performance.

In the COD 302 Design Studio course "Art Following the Flow," students utilized the power of art and design to convey messages about the importance of freshwater resources. Following the route of the campus stream, students listened to the unheard voice of the stream, explored the natural landscape, and developed creative communication solutions and design projects. Conducting a collective work process under the name 'Codlective,' 12 students each produced projects in Özyeğin University laboratories. These creative works were placed at designated points along the stream route and shared with the public during the 'Greenhack' event on June 5th, World Environment Day.



Peace and Sustainability Grove

Since 2014, Özyeğin University has established a tradition of tree planting on its campus aimed at fostering a sustainable environment. These annual tree-planting events, organized by the HSE Committee and Student Dean Office and held at the start of each academic year, have gradually formed a "Peace and Sustainability Grove" on the university grounds, which has developed its own natural habitat over time. This green space, enriched by hundreds of trees, offers students, academic staff, and administrative employees the opportunity to engage with nature and enhance their environmental awareness. Özyeğin University's commitment to environmental protection is explicitly outlined in its Human Resources Policy. As one of the world's top 100 greenest universities and the top-ranked foundation university in Türkiye in the GreenMetric rankings for four consecutive years (2019-2024), Özyeğin University prioritizes the preservation of biodiversity on its campus. Over the past decade, more than 18,000 trees have been planted to enhance biodiversity, with a focus on selecting plants suited to the local climate. These plants are maintained with dedicated care, including regular pruning and an efficient irrigation system (drip and sprinkler), ensuring their longevity and the protection of campus green spaces.

ÖzÜ Bostan: Campus Garden for Sustainable Agriculture

The ÖzÜ Bostan (Özyeğin University Garden) project creates a campus-based organic vegetable garden that promotes sustainable land use, biodiversity, and ecosystem health while providing employees and the campus community with access to fresh, locally grown food. By maintaining an organic garden on campus, the university protects and restores a portion of its terrestrial ecosystem, providing habitat for pollinators and beneficial insects essential for biodiversity.

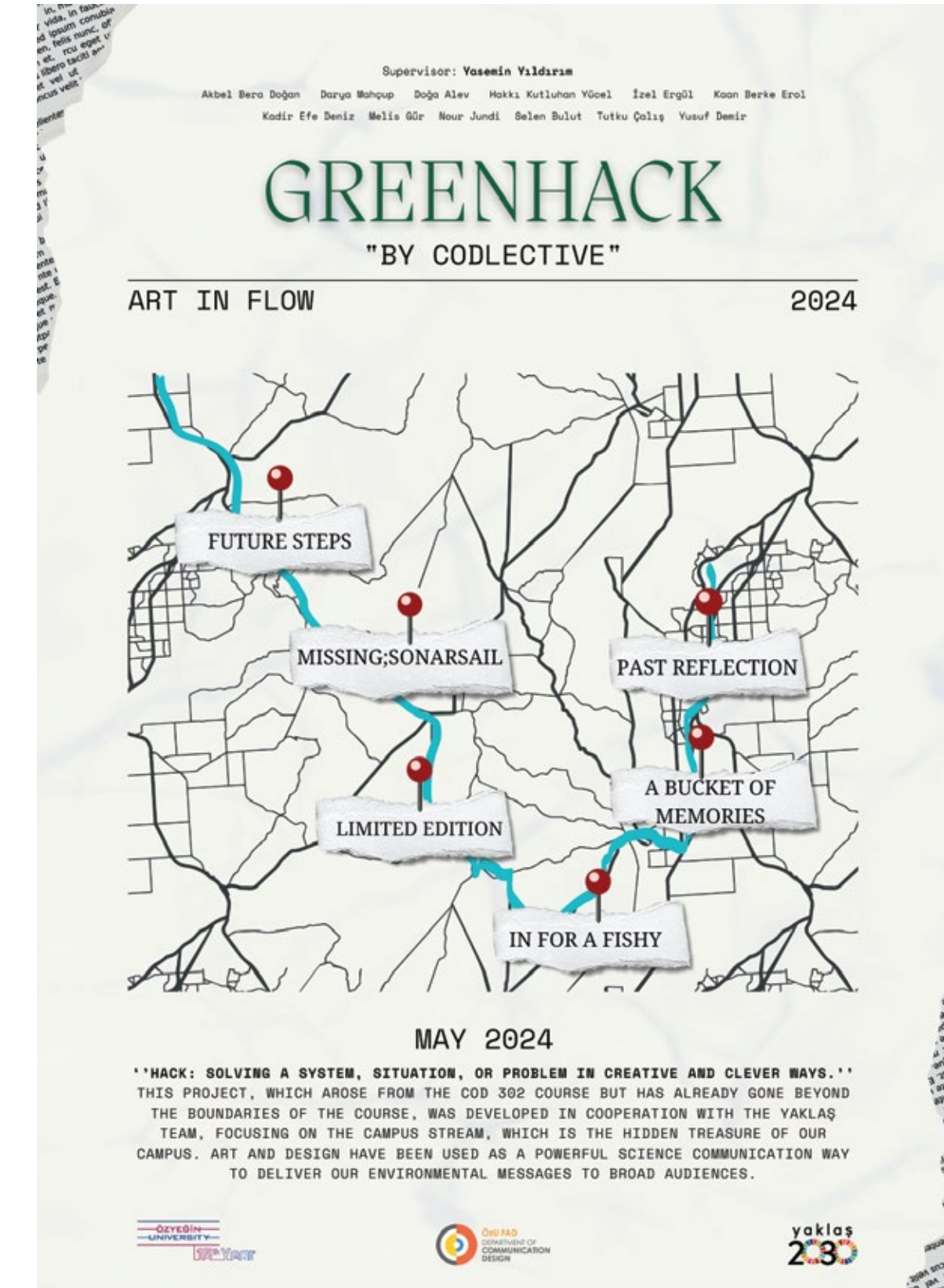
The garden employs sustainable agricultural techniques including crop rotation, composting, and natural pest management, avoiding synthetic pesticides and fertilizers that can degrade soil health and harm local ecosystems. This hands-on demonstration of ecological agriculture principles helps raise awareness among students, faculty, and staff about the critical connections between healthy soils, biodiversity, and sustainable food systems. The project also promotes employee health and well-being by providing access to nutritious, chemical-free produce while creating green spaces that enhance campus environmental quality and contribute to urban ecosystem services.

Yaklaş 2030 Program: Greenhack Event

The Yaklaş 2030 Program brings the effects of dense urbanization on the ecosystem to the forefront of discussion through the dry stream on campus. Student projects in the fields of communication, design, and art that draw attention to the stream on campus were presented to the public at the "Greenhack" launch organized as part of the World Environment Day activities.

The Yaklaş 2030 Program, which has been running since 2018 under the Sustainability Platform at ÖzÜ, focuses on research and learning by approaching global issues from the perspective of science and art. Aiming to develop students' critical perspective, sensitivity, and responsibility towards global issues, the program's focus this year was on the dry stream on campus. With projects produced in different departments, courses, and workshops, the program takes a transdisciplinary approach to the current situation, future, and rewilding possibilities of freshwater resources.

These creative works were placed at designated points along the stream route. The exhibition "On the Edge of a Stream" (Bir Derenin Kenarında) based on the students' projects, opened at the Pavilion Building on 22nd March on Water Day and remained open until October 2024.





Preserving Türkiye's Agricultural Heritage Systems

The "Capacity Building on Agricultural Heritage Systems" project, led by Assoc. Prof. Faik Gür, Faculty of Social Sciences, and conducted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of Türkiye, with Özyeğin University serving as the service provider, aims to register the villages of Büyüksöğle, Küçüksöğle, and Geçmen in Antalya's Elmalı district as Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS).

GIAHS focuses on preserving traditional agricultural knowledge, practices, landscapes, and cultural values developed over thousands of years of human history, while ensuring their dynamic continuation and transmission to future generations. As Türkiye's first GIAHS application, this significant project has completed an application file for submission to the FAO GIAHS Secretariat, prepared two thematic reports, and organized a training program for ministry officials, contributing to the preservation of biodiversity and sustainable land management practices in rural communities.