**Bebekliler said ‘No to a Marina in the Bebek Bay’ as they launched *Bebek-1* into the Bosphorus**

***On April 23, 2016 Bebekliler Association and Bebek Citizens’ Initiative (BSG) volunteers introduced – a small rowboat named Bebek I - as their symbolic reference to a lifestyle totally opposite to the ‘Tekne Park Project’, an environmental disaster for Bebek and Istanbul. They also called attention to the rent-seeking mentality behind this unlawful project which shall increase the risk of sea accidents on the Bosphorus. The volunteers emphasized the importance of rowboats, now disappearing in the culture of coastal towns of the Bosphorus. During the event rowboat rides were arranged in the Bebek Bay. Fishing boats from neighboring coastal towns joined in to support them.***

Bebekliler and all those devoted to the protection of the Bosphorus (or the Istanbul Strait) have been bonded for a long time in resisting Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality’s (IBB) Mega Project of 11 Marinas. They are determined to continue their protests on democratic and legal fora with a positive tone until the project is totally cancelled.

While they discuss the cancelation of the project with the pertinent local government bodies, namely İSPARK and İBB, they also look for grounds to become partners in solution to the development of a better shoreline in Bebek. They also seek assitance from other NGOs, professional chambers, legal advisers, district organisations of political parties, assembly members of local governments, and their committies on the environment.

Together with all those who believe in the preservation of the natural shores and the sea at the Istanbul Strait, Bebekliler Association and Bebek Initiative (BSG) invited people to meet once again at Bebek Park on April 24, 2016. This was the first anniversary of their public protest and informative march that was held in April 2015 when they held a symbolic launching of rowboat named *Bebek 1*. In the April of the previous year Bebekliler formed a long human chain all along the Bebek coast, saying **‘No to Tekne Park’** (marina).

They declared their resolution to take ownership of and protect the Bosphorus towns, woods, coasts, bays and culture. In this event, too, they re-iterated their reasons for refusing the ‘Tekne Park Project’ and repeated their proposals:

**Reasons for refuting the Marina Project:**

1. **The ‘Tekne Park Project’ is against the law.**
2. **It is an environmentally unfriendly project that has no respect for local citizens. It shall harm urban life.**
3. **It is a project that shall endanger and risk the sustainability of safe passage at the strait, and thus create immense danger to human life and physical safety in the vicinity.**

**Proposals:**

* **We propose designing an examplary shore plan that takes Bebek’s historical, cultural and natural assets into consideration along with present-day values and needs.**
* **The ‘Tekne Park’ marina Project is Against Domestic and International Laws:**
  1. **It is against Law 2960 decreed specifically for the preservation and protection of the Bosphorus (the Istanbul Strait)** which says:

“The cultural and historic assets, as well as the natural beauty and environment of the Bosphorus should be preserved and protected.”

* “The Shores of the Bosphorus can only be used for the benefit of the PEOPLE.”
  1. **Turkey is a party to the European Landscape Convention** Protection of landscape is one of the aims of the convention.

‘Tekne Park’ marina is going to ruin the beautiful, natural coastal landscape of Bebek.

* 1. **Bebek residents stood against the ‘Tekne Park’ project –a marina in reality – twice and won\* the case they filed back in 1989.**

Calling a marina with a newly coined label “Tekne Park’ is an attempt to by-pass laws regarding the Bosphorus.

\*TC, İstanbul, 1. İdari Mahkemesi "Yat Limanı İptal Davası' Esas No: 1989 / 04 - Karar No: 1989 / 712

* 1. **‘Tekne Park Project has no respect for people. It shall harm the environment and urban life.**
* Because of increased numbers of vessels, from Küçük Bebek all the way to Aşiyan, ‘Tekne Park’ means much more pollution to be discharged into the Bosphorus.
* “**Don’t be surprised if you cannot see the sea when you come to Bebek!”** That is because ‘Tekne Park’ is going to create a wall of vessels in the middle of the sea, destroying the beautiful Bosphorus landscape. In reality that is visual pollution.
* Access to Bebek is possible via a two-lane coastal road. As is, the road is not enough to handle ordinary traffic let alone serve as a MAIN ARTERIAL ROAD in an earthquake-prone city such as Istanbul.
* Traffic congestion on weekends and on sunny weekdays make it almost impossible to for ambulances or fire engines to get to Bebek during any emergency.
* **As things are today, Bebek cannot carry the load of more people, more vehicles or more boats on its shoreline!**
* The Bosphorus (the Istanbul Strait )is a biological corridor for 33 different marine animals. It is also a passage for dolphins that have been taken under protection at the **UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre’s (UNEP-CMC) 8th Conference on ‘Migratory Species’ held in Niarobi.**
* All marine life shall be negatively impacted by increased pollution in the Bosphorus.
* ‘Tekne Park’ also means serious disruption of sea transport on the Bosphorus, because the routes of domestic mass transport vessels shall be blocked- they will no longer be able to access the Bebek boat landing.

1. **The project is endangering the sustainability of safe passage through the Bosphorus (the Istanbul Strait )and is going to create great risks to lives and property.**

* Turkey is responsible for ensuring safe passage through the Turkish Straits.
* The Bosphorus is the world’s busiest, narrowest, and most dangerous sea route open to international traffic.
* Bebek is located right next to the narrowest point of the Bosphorus. Whether it is at Bebek or anywhere else on the strait, it is not the right policy to make this dangerous and narrow water passage a center of attraction for mooring boats or yachts, by building 11 marinas.
* On average 50,000 vessels pass through the Bosphorus annually. Approximately 10,000 of these carry hazardous material. Construction of the Bebek ‘Tekne Park’ shall increase existing risks even more.
* Many marine accidents happened in the distant and near past. There were also many near misses of disaster.
* Considering sea and wind conditions, Bebek is definetely not suitable for building a ‘Tekne Park’. *Kıble* and easterly winds have strong impact on Bebek shores and create difficulty for all vessels tied to the shore or anchored further out.
* When 300 hundred boats are moored together at the’Tekne Park’ 100-150m from the shore, risks of potential accidents shall multiply.

***For maritme pilots there are three suitable locations to drop anchor on the Bosphorus during emergencies (such as blocked rudders). Among the three, the Tarabya ve İstinye bays are already blocked by marinas. The only one left is the shallow waters of the Bebek Bay - a different and very important area that should not to be sacrificed.***

**What do Bebekliler Association and Bebek Semt Girişimi (BSG) want? What do they propose?**

**We want the Metropolitan Municipality of Istanbul (IBB) to bring some order to the Bebek coast line**

However, while this shore line is being designed:

* We do not want large vessels to be tied to the shore, blocking people’s view of the Bosphorus or the Asian shore.
* We want the Bebek lighthouse and vicinity to maintain its natural presence.
* We would like to see the Bebek boat landing used more frequently for mass transport.
* We would like to see increased number of trips by the inner city boats, at late hours, too. We would like to see incentives created for taking the sea route to Bebek - especially on weekends.
* Of course, we would like to see the IBB, not others, receiving the revenues of all these improvements and for mooring of small boats.

**We propose creating an examplary shore design where Bebek’s historic, cultural and natural assets are entertwined with contemporary needs and values.**

* With the input provided by an informal consulting group from Bebek on the history of the village, there needs to be an in-debth study of the main proposal carried out by all parties concerned,

**The IBB can organise a competition for an examplary shore design that would include the Küçük Bebek Square and reach all the way to the Aşiyan coast .**

* **The best project can then be elected by citizens and experts.**

**Bebek Semt Girişimi (BSG):**

**Facebook :** [**https://www.facebook.com/BebekSemtGirisimi**](https://www.facebook.com/BebekSemtGirisimi)

**Twitter:** [**https://twitter.com/bebeksemt**](https://twitter.com/bebeksemt)

**OTHER RESOURCES:**

**Sept. 15, 2015, BODEP & Bebekliler Derneği Presentation at the C20 Summit in Istanbul**

* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PzH5Y03FYOQ>

**May12, 2015: Çetin Ünsalan’s program ‘Ekopolitik’ at Ulusal TV**

* [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zr\_BrG17kFE**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zr_BrG17kFE)

**Jan. 29, 2015 Mirgün Cabas’ program ‘Her Şey’ at CNN Turk**

* **[http://youtu.be/cEy8vXGdIA4](http://youtu.be/cEy8vXGdIA4" \t "_blank)**

**Jan.4, 2015: Interview at Açık Radyo ‘Açık Gazete Program**

* [**http://bebekhepimizin.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Acik-Gazete-4-Şubat-2015.mp3**](http://bebekhepimizin.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Acik-Gazete-4-Şubat-2015.mp3)

**.**

**3 TRT Documentaries about the Istanbul Strait (the Bosphorus)**

* + - [**http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w\_lT2aVFHcc**](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_lT2aVFHcc)
    - [**http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AWCcvlJ7Y3E**](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AWCcvlJ7Y3E)
    - [**http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3VC7YGTVb5k**](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3VC7YGTVb5k)

**Negative outcomes of the Istinye ‘Tekne Park’ marina**

* + - [**http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w\_lT2aVFHcc**](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_lT2aVFHcc)