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# The South-East Anatolian Project

The following text was prepared by ATA Construction Ltd. for this issue

Being one of the World's biggest regional development projects, the South-East Anatolian Project (known as GAP) is also ranked as the most enormous complex ever to be put into the construction stage in Turkey.

GAP covers the lower Euphrates and Tigris regions and the plains between these two rivers cover a total area of 73.863 km<sup>2</sup>, which is equal to about 9.5 % of the total area of the country.

GAP consists of 13 regional irrigation and power sub-projects, 7 of which are in the Euphrates Basin, while the remaining 6 are in the Tigris Basin.

GAP is a multipurpose development project.

In addition to the dams, hydroelectric power plants and irrigation works to be built, this project includes the development of facilities and services in agriculture, transportation, industry, education, healthcare, tourism and other sectors of the economy.

It is evident that GAP will improve the economic and social structures of the regional communities, creating for them a large amount of work opportunities in agriculture and industry.

It is envisaged that, when completed,

there will be 21 dams and 17 hydro-power plants on the EUPHRATES and TIGRIS rivers and their tributaries within the GAP boundaries.

By the time this project has been completed in steps over the next 30 years, a land area of 1.800.000 ha will become an irrigated cultivation area, and power generation plant with a capacity of 7.557 MW will be installed, generating a total of 27.8 billion KWH of electrical energy.

The size of this irrigated area can be appreciated more clearly when compared with the 1.2 million ha area which is the sum total of all arid land that has been turned into irrigated land by the State Hydraulic Works (abbreviated as DSI) from the beginning until 1983. The benefit to our national economy resulting from this GAP irrigation will reach TL 600 billion annually on a 1986 basis.

When GAP is completed, the amount of hydroelectric power exploited will increase to 1-4 from its current 1-6 of the national exploitable hydroelectric power potential.

Based on 1986 rates, the total amount of investment required for completion of the GAP scheme is 7 trillion T.L.

By the time has been completed a land area of a size 5 times as big as Çukurova will be turned to agricultural

production, and the resulting increases in agricultural production will be even higher than the present national records.

It is obvious that obtaining these expected benefits as the result of such a massive project is dependent upon the resolution of the problems associated with the project itself.

The present total cultivated area in the GAP region, irrigated by the State offices (including also the Ceylanpinar State Production Farm) is 63.000 ha, while the present total cultivated area in the same region irrigated by various private enterprises is about 127.000 ha.

Despite certain problems that are encountered, the records obtained from development of these irrigation schemes indicate that, provided certain measures are taken it is probable that the above predicted increases can be achieved when the new irrigation works are completed. It is emphasised that there is a close relationship between the expected economic goals and the resolution of certain associated problems encountered either today or during implementation of these irrigation works. Some of these problems are:

1- Improvement of the agricultural structure: To improve the current ownership distribution, an attempt to con-

centrate the present scattered pattern of land ownership prevailing in the areas already irrigated or to be irrigated in this region, as well as to resolve the current settlement and employment problems. The necessity to establish the appropriate legal regulations and implementations in line with Constitutional Law should be strongly emphasised.

In the Şanlı Urfa Province, which has the largest area for future irrigation in the GAP region, certain agricultural structures started to be established as from 1973, when the Land Ownership and Agricultural Reform Law was made effective, and continued until 1977, when this law was cancelled by the Constitutional Court: meanwhile, large amounts of land were shifted to public ownership, the lands of the State sector were marked off, however, the agricultural structure that was expected to emerge with the help of this Reform did not materialise. The establishment of the appropriate legal regulations in line with Constitutional Law, and the improvement of the agricultural structure on a scale that will lead to agricultural development are of major importance.

2- Education: Human beings are the basic element of the development of a society. This development will begin with priority being given to agriculture and as a chain reaction, agro-based industries, the processing of their products, the development of the service sector, the use of the products in domestic and foreign trade, the broad application of the most modern technical and technological methods and the use of the most modern means of production are possible primarily with the education of the local people who are going to use these amenities.

Contemporary cultivation techniques and successful irrigation are made possible primarily by the education of farmers and the efforts of all the bodies responsible for this agricultural training programme will have to be made widespread and effective according to a predetermined plan and programme.

### 3- Other Problems:

In conjunction with the availability of irrigation the investment required for efficient cultivation on each farm, timely financial aid to farmers on favourable terms to enable them to buy their input material, and the means of protecting agricultural land from soil erosion all have to be materialised. Appropriate measures have to be implemented in order to prevent agricultural land from being used for non-agricultural purposes, industrial facilities, transportation and other related sectors will develop in parallel with the completion of GAP.

It is predicted that together with the regional development, the current regional rate of annual population increase, which is 2.9 % (this being much above the corresponding national average of 2.4 %) will further increase so that the region will have a population of about 10 million. Efforts have to be made to resolve infrastructure problems related to settlement, education, health, transportation, water supply, electrification and the like.

In conjunction with overcoming the above problems, to get the maximum benefits but of the livestock and vegetable production resulting from GAP, and to turn this project into an integrated agricultural development project, both the domestic and foreign markets will have to be coordinated by

market organization, together with the agro-industry, communications and transportation facilities, in order to process and market the agricultural products in compliance with market conditions, Other sectoral services must be developed, and to resolve all of these matters all related organisations and institutions need to be coordinated and integrated.

For this purpose the government has established a new unit in Şanlı Urfa referred to as the GAP Project Unit, under the direction of Central Planning the Office in Ankara. Furthermore, one of the Deputy Prime Ministers has been exclusively made responsible for the coordination of regional development.

The purpose of studying rural development is to develop the water and human resources, and to plan investments by optimising the physical and social infrastructural potentials.

Cooperation on this matter with the Agricultural Faculty of ÇUKUROVA University has been established. Included in this scheme are the formation of a data bank to develop an inventory for research work, the establishment of a research center and a remote sensing centre for land surveys with the help of satellites.

In the meantime a French Company has been appointed to render engineering services to develop the master plan keys for the application of agro dependent industry in the GAP region and to develop the detailed feasibility studies.

We all anticipate the completion of GAP, which will make the of the region green and fertile and add tremendous value to the region and to the Turkish economy as a whole.