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In the Land of Ostriches: Developmentalism,  
Environmental Degradation and Forced  
Migration in Turkey

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# Outline of the Presentation

- Purpose
  - Cases
  - Methods
  - Findings
  - Policy implications and Bonn Points
  - Future research
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# Purpose of the Study

- Process of migration caused by environmental change
    - types of difficulties
    - the role of social and economic vulnerabilities
    - the support mechanisms
  - To derive policy suggestions
  - To attract attention to the environmental change and migration nexus
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# Environment - Turkey

- Environmental Legislation
    - Ministry of the Environment
  
  - Climate Change
    - Most important problem for the future.
    - Extreme weather conditions
    - Severe drought since summer 2007
      - In 2007, drought cost Turkey between **1.3 and 1.8 billion** Euros and affected approximately 435,000 farmers.
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# Migration - Turkey

- Rapid urbanization starting in the 1960s.
  - Forced Migration in Turkey
  - Environmental Change and Forced Migration
    - The Land of the Ostriches
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# Environmental Change and Forced Migration in Turkey (cases)

- Development-Induced Forced Migration

- Ataturk Dam



- Drought-Induced Forced Migration

- Suruc



# Map of Turkey and the location of relevant provinces and districts



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# Methods

**Primary research (field-work in Urfa, Suruc, Istanbul, Ankara, Torbali, Bulgurca):**

<i>Type of Interview</i>	<i># of Interviews</i>
Expert Interviews	14
Ataturk Dam	28
Suruc	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>62</b>

**Secondary sources:**

Guler Parlak (2006, 2007).

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# Ataturk Dam and Forced Migration

## Cases of forced migration examined

- Resettlement arranged by the state
    - Yalikhoy-Didim (Aydin) rural resettlement (Guler Parlak, 2007).
    - Bulgurca-Izmir rural resettlement (fieldwork conducted in April 2008).
    - New Samsat urban resettlement (Guler Parlak, 2006).
  - Resettlement through migrants' own means following the reception of confiscation compensation
    - Urfa city centre (fieldwork conducted in October-November 2007).
    - Torbali-Izmir (fieldwork conducted in April 2008).
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# Ataturk Dam and Forced Migration: Impact on Migrants

- Those resettled by the state
  - Those who resettled with their own means
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# Ataturk Dam and Forced Migration: Impact on Migrants

- Those resettled by the state
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# Policy Implications of Findings from Development-Induced Forced Migration

## What is necessary?

- ❑ Resettlement Location: Participatory Decision-Making
  - ❑ More and Convincing Information
  - ❑ More serious guidance
    - Training for new jobs
    - Credit should be provided for new sectors
    - Financial guidance to those who receive confiscation compensation
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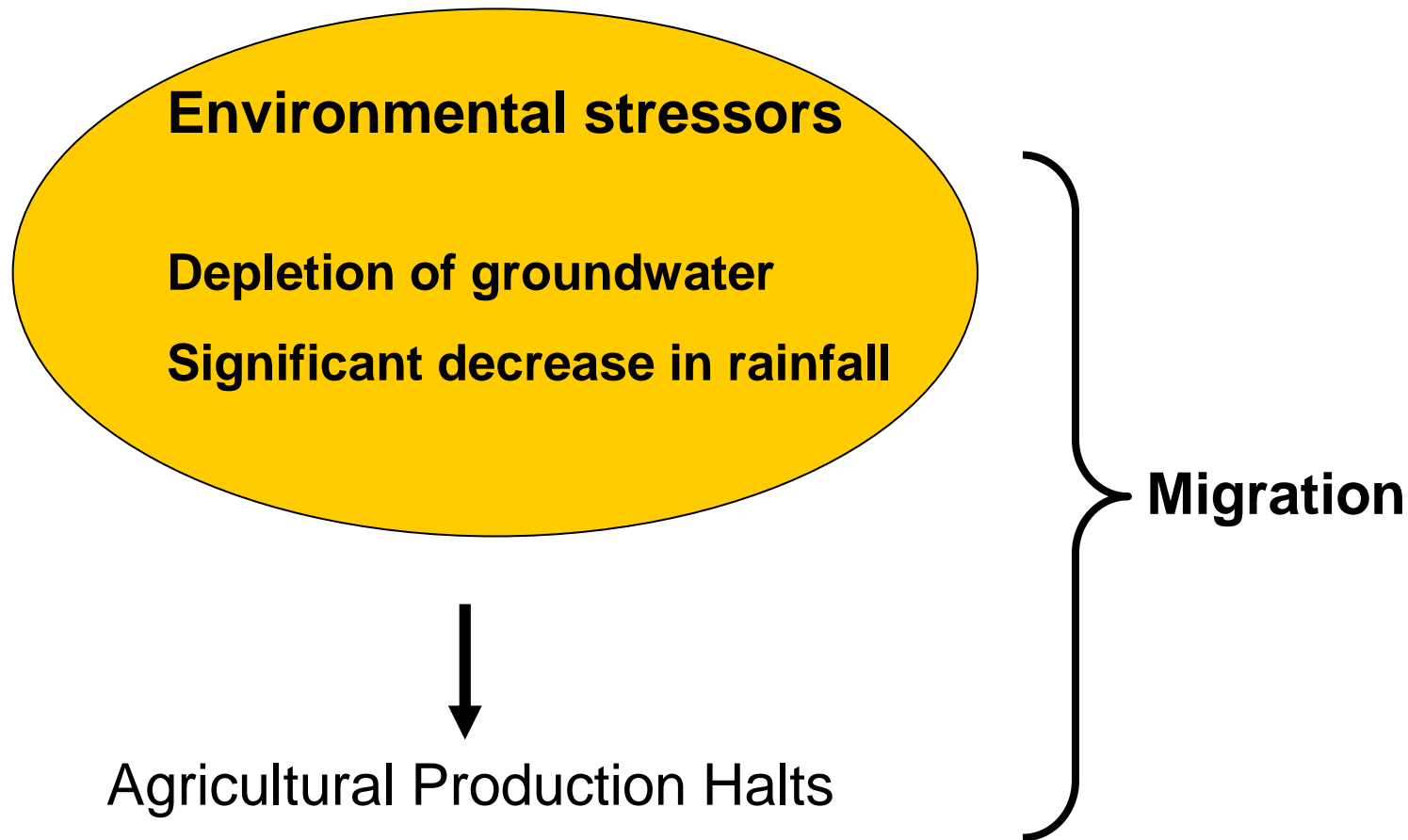
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# Drought-Induced Forced Migration - Suruc

- Population: 82.247 (2000 census)
  - 82 villages, 134 hamlets, 1 town and 1 district
  - Total land size is 73,749 hectares
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# Drought-Induced Forced Migration - Suruc



Agricultural Production Halts

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# Drought-Induced Forced Migration

## ■ Impact

- not only on farmers but all sectors: shop and restaurant owners, truck drivers, merchants migrated because of the environmental stressors

## ■ Those who had the means

- migrated permanently to big cities

## ■ The impoverished small farmers

- Migrate seasonally as agricultural or construction worker
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# Demonstration in Suruc (April 2008) asking government to complete the water project



“We are migrating because there is no water.”

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# Policy Implications of Findings from Drought-Induced Forced Migration

- State should regulate the use of natural resources
  - If impact of environmental stressor not preventable → alternative projects or support mechanisms for those who have to migrate
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# Bonn Points (Definitions/Conceptualisation)

## ■ Typology

- Development induced forced migration (Ataturk Dam)
- Environmentally motivated migrant (Suruc)

## ■ Interacting factors

- There is always a combination of environmental and social/economic factor

## ■ Role of environmental change

- Nostalgia for the past and a wish to return (among elderly)
  - Return not feasible and desirable for the younger generation
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# Bonn Points (Measurement/Driving Factors)

- Tipping Points?
    - Gradual environmental degradation → gradual migration
    - Tipping Point: when it is no longer feasible to dig deeper for water
  - Measure of dependence of livelihood on environment
    - Very difficult because of interrelations between sectors
  - Interaction between poverty, environmental change and migration
    - Wealthy → easier to migrate
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# Concluding Remarks

- There is migration caused by environmental degradation in Turkey
  - En masse environmental degradation induced migration not very common
    - Most are small scale and sporadic
    - Many of the most polluted areas attract a lot of migrants because they provide employment
  - Climate change is a likely perpetrator of mass migration – given the fact that 40 percent of Turkey's population still makes a living of agricultural production. Further research is needed in this area.
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## Future Research Agenda: Extension of current research in Turkey

Multi-method research project: larger number of surveys with migrants in their destination of migration to determine the causes for their migration and the importance of environmental factors.

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Thank you...

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