

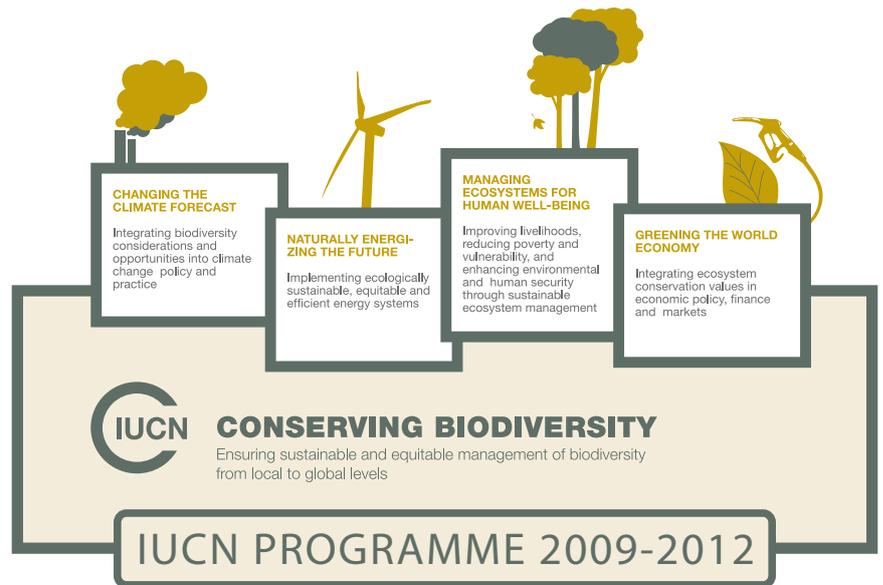


Investing in Nature and People

Celebrating the International Year of Biodiversity 2010

Annual Report 2010





About IUCN

IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges.

IUCN works on biodiversity, climate change, energy, human livelihoods and greening the world economy by supporting scientific research, managing field projects all over the world, and bringing governments, NGOs, the UN and the private sector together to develop policy, laws and best practices.

IUCN is the world's oldest and largest global environmental organization, with more than 1,000 government and NGO members and almost 11,000 volunteer experts in some 160 countries. IUCN's work is supported by over 1,000 staff in 60 offices and hundreds of partners in the public, NGO and private sectors around the world.

www.iucn.org

IUCN Regional Office for West Asia (ROWA)

The West Asia region is the convergence point of Mediterranean, Persian and Arabic civilizations. IUCN Regional Office for West Asia (ROWA) was established in October 2004 covering thirteen countries in West Asia including Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Palestine, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

We work through three thematic programmes including: the Regional Water Resources & Drylands Programme (REWARD), the Protected Areas Programme and the Marine Programme. Through these thematic programmes we demonstrate the strengths of IUCN through knowledge sharing and developing new models for conservation and sustainable development.

The role of IUCN ROWA is to coordinate environmental activities at the regional and local levels, particularly in relation to regional environmental agreements and global environmental conventions. At the same time, IUCN enhances knowledge, empowerment and governance around biodiversity and water resource management through the design and implementation of projects in the field.

IUCN ROWA acts as a platform that promotes and facilitates a multi-stakeholder decision process involving governments, civil society and research institutions. Environmental awareness is a key issue to making a difference; thus the office facilitates communication, coordination and information exchange among different actors in the region.

www.iucn.org/westasia

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Forward: Investing in Biodiversity and People



2010 witnessed the celebration of biodiversity and the 10th anniversary for the Earth Charter. These two events reminded us of the responsibility we all share towards nature and people. They also reminded us of the need and value for ensuring harmony between society, markets and environment and the role of civil society and the business sector in responding to global challenges including climate change, poor governance, biodiversity loss and poverty. IUCN ROWA is keen to articulate and develop practical field projects and networks to demonstrate and reflect the principles of the Earth Charter through working with members and partners as illustrated in this annual report.

It is illuminating to see the close linkage and resemblance between the IUCN vision and mission and that of the Earth Charter. Both call for a just and sustainable world and seek to inspire in all people a new sense of shared responsibility for the well-being of humanity, the community of life, and future generations. This implies that IUCN work as a leader in the green movement is far from being an interest group but rather a unifying entity which has a mandate to save the planet along with its people.

IUCN ROWA celebrated the International Year of Biodiversity and conveyed the message that ecosystems represent our life support systems and infrastructure for sustainable development. The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) study indicates that coral reefs annually generate up to \$189,000 per hectare in terms of ecosystem services, tourism and coastal defense. Also, 15 per cent of the global carbon dioxide emissions are absorbed by forests every year. The annual losses as a result of deforestation and forest degradation are estimated to be around \$3 trillion. Linking poverty alleviation and livelihood to biodiversity is key to realizing the linkage between human and environmental security.

IUCN ROWA played a key role in mainstreaming gender and climate change in the climate debate. The climate change summit in Cancun, Mexico, delivered a balanced package of decisions that restored faith in the multilateral process where nations were able to reach a consensus on a common cause. Also, the climate summit in Mexico resulted in key milestones where both industrialized and developing countries agreed to reduce emissions, develop a green climate fund and enhance technical cooperation. The IUCN ROWA water programme is contributing to knowledge in integrated water resource management through key water publications. IUCN ROWA recognizes that the global challenges of water, energy and food security are compelling us to respect sustainability principles, invest in our natural capital, embody good governance structures, re-think our development models, and change our consumption patterns. IUCN as a membership organization is keen to set standards and develop best practices in sustainability and the 2010 annual report provides ample evidence on how IUCN members shape a new discourse of sustainability.

Odeh Al Jayyousi, PhD.

Regional Director

Our Donors and Partners 2010

IUCN ROWA is most grateful to all those who contributed to the success of our regional office through their generous financial contributions and partnership in 2010.

Our donors 2010

- European Union (EU) through ESARO
- The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) through the Ministry of Environment, Jordan
- The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DGIS), Netherlands through IUCN Water & Nature Initiative (WANI)
- UKaid (formerly Department of International Development (DFID), UK
- Finish Government through Office of the IUCN Global Gender Advisor
- Danish Government through NIRAS
- Global Women Fund through the Arab Women's Organization
- Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and Fonds Française pour l'Environnement Mondial (FFEM) through the Royal Botanic Garden of Jordan
- Ministry of Tourism, Oman
- United Nations Environment Programme - Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE), International Environmental Technology Centre (IETC)
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) - Regional Office for West Asia (ROWA)
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Amman Office

Our partners 2010

Regional Partners

- League of Arab States
- WANA Forum
- Arab Countries Water Utilities Association (ACWUA)
- BirdLife International, Middle East
- Mohammed Bin Zayed Conservation Fund
- Gulf Research Center (GRC)
- The Center for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE)
- United Nations Environment Programme – Regional Office for West Asia (UNEP ROWA)
- United Nations Environment Programme – Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE), International Environmental Technology Center (IETC)
- Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO)
- The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands • Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD) • African Fund for World Heritage

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

- Presidency of Meteorology & Environment (PME)
- The Saudi Wildlife Commission (SWC)

Oman

- Ministry of Tourism
- Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs

Qatar

- Ministry of Environment
- Friends of Environment Center (FEC)

UAE

- United Nations University (UNU) – INWEH
- Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve (DDCR)
- Emirates Environmental Group (EEG)

Bahrain

- Bahrain Women's Association

Kuwait

- Environment Protection Authority (EPA)
- Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR)
- Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science (KFAS)
- Arab Centre for Environmental Law (ARCEL) – Kuwait University

Jordan

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Jordan
- Ministry of Environment

- Ministry of Agriculture

- Ministry of Water and Irrigation
- The Royal Society for Conservation of Nature (RSCN)

- The Royal Botanic Garden

- Mercy Corps

- Arab Women Organization (AWO)

- Jordan Badia Research Programme (BRP)

- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Amman Office

- Jordan Bar Association

- Zarqa Municipality

- Development Zones Commission • USAID Jordan Economic Development Program (SABEQ)

- Green Building Council

Lebanon

- Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL)

- Mada

- Association for Forests, Development and Conservation (AFDC),

Palestine

- Palestinian Hydrological Group (PHG)

- Union of Agricultural Working Committees (UAWC)

- Palestine Wildlife Society (PWS)

- Environment Quality Authority (EQA)

- Ministry of Agriculture

Syria

- General Commission for Badia Management and Development

- Ministry of Environment

- Syrian Society for Conservation of Wildlife (SSCW)

Egypt

- The Social Fund for Development, Egypt

- Arab Water Council

- Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation

- Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS)

- CARE International

Iraq

- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Iraq Office

- Ministry of Environment

- Nature Iraq

- Ministry of Construction and Housing

- Ministry of Migration and Displaced

Iran

- Department of Environment Iran

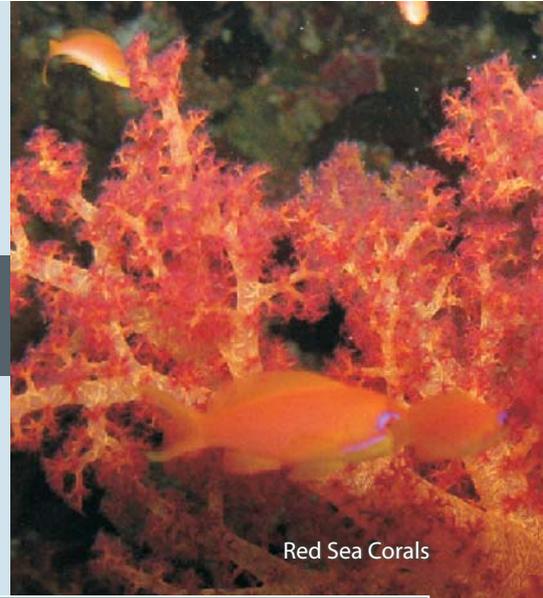
Yemen

- Ministry of Water and Environment

- Sana'a University, Water and Environment Centre

- Ministry of Oil and Minerals

Highlights of 2010



Red Sea Corals

January	January 31 – February 4 IUCN ROWA participates in the 11th Conservation Workshop for the Fauna of Arabia and First Conference on Biodiversity Conservation in the Arabian Peninsula held in Sharjah, UAE
February	February 8 IUCN assisted RSCN and the Ministry of Environment in categorizing all protected areas in Jordan according to IUCN standards February 12-17 IUCN regional and global teams supported by the IUCN WCPA organized the first long term strategic programme development mission to Oman in close collaboration with Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs of Oman.
April	April 27 IUCN ROWA held a national workshop on establishing payments for watershed services in Jordan building on the IUCN WANI Publication (Pay)
May	May 16-18 IUCN ROWA organized a session on Hima during the WANA Forum 2010 held in Amman, Jordan May 24 IUCN ROWA and Ministry of Environment celebrate the International Year of Biodiversity 2010 through announcing the winner of the Best Investigative Reports on the Zarqa River Basin Award
June	June 14 – 17 IUCN ROWA participates in the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) steering committee meeting held in Alberta, Canada. June 15 IUCN ROWA signs MOU with IUCN Eastern and Southern Africa (ESARO) for implementing the Securing Rights and Restoring Lands for Improved Livelihoods project funded by the European Union.
July	July 25-29 IUCN ROWA organizes a Regional Transboundary Water Management workshop in partnership with UNESCO Amman Office



Red Sea



Black Iris, Jordan

<h2>August</h2>	<p>August 1-5 IUCN ROWA and the Arab Women's Organization in Jordan hold a Gender and Climate Change training course for community-based organizations (CBO) and women's groups, which was funded by the Global Women's Fund</p>
<h2>October</h2>	<p>October 1 IUCN ROWA signs agreement with IUCN Global Senior Gender Advisor's Office in Meso America to proceed with the Gender and Climate Change agenda in the Arab region (phase I) which is funded by the Finish Government</p> <p>October 24-27 IUCN ROWA holds the Second Media as Partners in Education for Sustainable Development training workshop in partnership with UNESCO Amman Office.</p> <p>October 18-29 IUCN ROWA participates in the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP10) which took place in Nagoya, Japan.</p>
<h2>November</h2>	<p>November IUCN ROWA holds a regional workshop on climate change environmental indicators in the Arab region in partnership with the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) and the Center for Environment and Development in the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE) in Cairo, Egypt.</p> <p>November 1-3 Ministry of Environment in Jordan in collaboration with IUCN ROWA and Office of the IUCN Senior Global Gender Adviser, organizes a national workshop titled "Gender and Climate Change – Towards a Gender Programme on Climate Change in Jordan".</p> <p>November 23-24 Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Earth Charter through launching IUCN Arabic-translated publications: "Flow", "Pay", and "The Ecosystem Approach" jointly with the Ministry of Environment</p> <p>29 November - 10 December IUCN ROWA participates in the 16th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Cancun, Mexico.</p>
<h2>December</h2>	<p>December 5-9 IUCN partners with the Arab Countries Water Utilities Association (ACWUA) during the first Arab Water Week held in Amman, Jordan.</p> <p>December 15 Launching the IUCN Study of Salt Water Intrusion in the Upper Aquifer in Azraq Basin in collaboration with Ministry of Water and Irrigation in Jordan.</p> <p>December 21-23 IUCN ROWA holds a regional workshop on climate change monitoring and metrology systems in partnership with the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) and the Center for Environment and Development in the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE) in Amman, Jordan.</p> <p>December 31 IUCN and the Ministry of Agriculture in Jordan hold the first steering committee meeting for the Securing Rights and Restoring Lands for Improved Livelihoods Project</p>

Moving Ahead Towards Biodiversity Conservation in West Asia

Programme Achievements

Working with members

RURAL POVERTY REDUCTION THROUGH EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE OF NATURAL RESOURCES

IUCN has initiated a sub-regional project in Syria and Lebanon that aims to improve natural resource governance for rural poverty reduction, which is part of a five-year global IUCN programme implemented through partners from different countries, namely Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Benin, Lebanon, Syria, South Africa, Mozambique, the Drylands of Africa, Bolivia and Peru. The purpose of this programme is to improve livelihood security through promoting better environmental governance, including fair and equitable access to natural resources, new benefit sharing arrangements, and more participative and transparent decision making.

This project focuses on testing and demonstrating participatory approaches for planning, development, and management of natural resources at the local level by promoting increased participation and representation of stakeholders (mainly end-users) in planning and decision-making processes. Empowerment and awareness raising of local communities are project priorities, especially for farmers and local government agencies. At a different level, the project also focuses on effective stakeholder dialogues that strongly coordinate the activities and decision-making processes of all key stakeholders at the community, governorate and national levels.

During the 2006 war in Lebanon, rural and remote areas were the most affected, destabilising the livelihood base of rural communities living on scarce natural resources. The economy in Lebanon depends largely on dryland agriculture and important fishery breeding activities along the Assi River. In 2010, IUCN worked through the Society for Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL) in the Upper Akkar area to develop a master plan for the project and empower communities towards local participation in the governance and management of natural resources. This has built a mutual trust among local communities and between SPNL and local communities in that area. The project has managed to create a neutral platform for local tribes to come up with a common vision on natural resources governance. This was demonstrated through the donation of one of the buildings in the Upper Akkar area by the Al-Jaafar tribe – one of the local tribes in Upper Akkar – for the purpose of creating a visitors' center for eco-tourism and capacity building for all communities surrounding that area.

In Syria, there is a need to improve the national and comprehensive legal framework regulating management of protected areas, ensure land rights and benefits to traditional users, and also to support the regulations of sustainable development in eco-tourism and local communities. IUCN worked through the General Commission for Badia Management and Development and the The Syrian Society for the Conservation of Wildlife in Syria to ensure the local communities involvement in the management of their natural resources that will lead to the poverty alleviation in that area. Several meetings took place with the local communities and stakeholders to identify the key challenges facing the local people and define their roles in achieving the project's priorities and objectives. The meetings also addressed the living conditions of Bedouin women and the role that they can play in improving the wellbeing in that area.

A number of workshops were organized by IUCN and the Syrian General Commission with local stakeholders to identify the characteristics of natural resources in the project area and the importance of eco-tourism in creating income-generating products and services that can enhance the economic situation of local communities. The workshops also ensured that synergies are created between the bald Ibis conservation project and governance of natural resources project. Harnessing traditional knowledge for conserving natural resources such as graze management in protected areas was also considered throughout the project implementation.



Moreover, the Syrian Society for the Conservation of Wildlife has played a major role in developing a stakeholder analysis through a series of local workshops and raising the awareness of local communities on biodiversity conservation through environmental education using on-the-ground examples like saving the bald ibis and natural resources in that area. On a different level, the SSCW have also contributed to the review of national legislations and environmental laws that are related to natural resources management.

This project, which is funded by UKaid (formerly the Department of International Development), is being implemented by IUCN ROWA in partnership with the Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL), MADA, the municipalities of Hermel and the Bekaa region in Lebanon, the General Commission for Badia Management and Development in Syria, the Syrian Society for Wildlife Conservation, and other community-based organisations in targeted areas in Syria.

SCREENING STUDY ON POTENTIAL WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION OF THE IRAQI MARSHLANDS



The Iraqi Marshlands and their inhabitants have witnessed three wars, a catastrophic draining and a precarious recovery process over the last 30 years. Environmental management in Iraq and particularly in the marshlands still suffers from this legacy. The marshes are listed in the tentative World Heritage List for Iraq as a mixed property.

Considering the vital role that IUCN plays as the advisory body for natural heritage to the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, IUCN has joined forces with UNEP and UNESCO to produce a study, the *"Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management in the Iraqi Marshlands – Screening Study on Potential World Heritage Nomination"*. The study was carried out within the framework of the UNEP-UNESCO World Heritage as a tool for Natural and Cultural Resources Management of the Iraqi Marshlands joint initiative.

This initiative aims to utilize the World Heritage nomination and management-planning process to ensure sustainable development of the Iraqi Marshlands and conserving the values inherent in the historical, cultural, environmental, and socio-economic characteristics of the area.

The general conclusion of the study, which was funded by the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea, showed that there is sufficient evidence to support further development of work towards a full World Heritage nomination of the area in relation to World Heritage natural criteria.

According to the IUCN study, the nomination and inscription process is considered a means to provide incentives and guidance for the development of a sustainable management regime for the marshlands. This management regime needs to integrate and build on the numerous existing initiatives for their sustainable management, and therefore be based on an active multi-stakeholder network and strong communication and coordination mechanisms. Initial steps to achieve the mechanisms which have been taken by this study are a comprehensive account of existing information, initiatives, and gaps, as well as support for the establishment of assessment and planning methods and tools.



Working with members

INTEGRATED ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT IN THE JORDAN RIFT VALLEY

In 2007, a project was established in the Jordan Rift Valley (JRV) to establish a network of four protected areas and seven smaller special conservation areas. These areas will serve as a connection between the larger protected areas for migrating birds, altogether representing a cross section of all key habitats and ecosystem types in the valley. This project was a natural response to the alarming dangers encountered by the natural resources of the Rift Valley caused by decades of incorrect planned development and climate

change which have led to threatening the values, functions and services of the ecological and cultural systems.

As a solution to these imbalances, the Integrated Ecosystem Management of the Jordan Rift Valley Project was initiated by one IUCN active member, the Royal Society for Conservation of Nature (RSCN) in partnership with the IUCN Regional Office for West Asia and a wide spectrum of national and local agencies from governmental and non-governmental sectors. The project is being funded by the Global Environment Facility/World Bank and is being implemented based on the Integrated Ecosystem Management Approach as a new national model for biodiversity conservation as it links to sustainable community-based development.

A network of sites is to be established along the valley, consisting of four high status protected areas (PA): Yarmouk, Jabal Masuda, Fifa and Qatar, in addition to seven collaboratively managed Special Conservation Areas (SCA): Wadi Ibn Hammad, Tal Al Arbreen, Humrat Maeen, and Rahmah. The PAs cover a total area of 56,950 hectares and are all delineated on the Jordan Valley's land-use master plan.

In 2010, the project announced the designation and establishment of Yarmouk Protected Area and therefore has signed an MOU with Al Shoala municipality agreeing on a partnership to manage the Yarmouk PA. The Qatar and Fifa PAs were also designated by the RSCN in 2010.

The JRV project has initiated the development of a socio-economic strategy that is expected to support the ecological and financial sustainability of conservation sites, bring improved economic and/or social benefits to target communities, and pioneer new approaches to nature-based economic development. IUCN has taken part in the JRV-established National Climate Change Taskforce Team that aims to develop a national technical platform for capacity building, knowledge exchange, sharing, and documenting best practices and scientific research in relation to climate change and biodiversity which will influence national policy.

IUCN Regional Office for West Asia has also given its international connections and technical expertise to the project that will continue operating till 2013. One of IUCN's major achievements, considered an integral part of the JRV project, was the categorization of Jordan's protected areas.

Working with members

JORDAN PROTECTED AREAS MANAGEMENT CATEGORIES

Realizing its pioneering role in protected areas management, IUCN assisted RSCN and the Ministry of Environment in categorizing all protected areas in Jordan according to IUCN standards which include the Azraq Wetlands Reserve, Mujib, Ajloun, Dana, Wadi Rum, Dibbeen, Aqaba Marine Park, and Yarmouk. This was done through a national workshop on protected areas management categories organised by the Ministry of Environment, RSCN and IUCN to explore IUCN's protected areas management categories, review the protected areas in Jordan, and try to apply these categories at the national level in consultation with site managers. The entire process was supported by the IUCN Global Programme on Protected Areas and the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA).

Working with members

SAVING THE MOST THREATENED BIRD IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Through the West Asia Protected Areas Programme, IUCN has initiated the Northern Bald Ibis Project in 2008 to establish new standards and practices for protected areas design and management in Syria, where activities to conserve the Bald Ibis were undertaken in the Palmyra Ibis Protected Area (IPA). A few individuals of the relict wild colony of the Northern Bald Ibis (NBI), *Geronticus eremita*, were discovered in the Syrian Palmyra Desert in 2002 and it suddenly became the rarest and most threatened bird in the Middle East. The Bald Ibis is listed on the IUCN Red List 2006 as a “Critically Endangered” species on a global scale. The project accomplished its goals in 2009 and the project team is still working on mobilizing additional resources. The second phase of the project is expected to focus on local communities around the Bald Ibis Protected Area to improve livelihoods in that area.



The Syrian First Lady while visiting the ibis nesting site

Syrian First Lady Asma Al Assad played a crucial role in making the satellite tagging operation and consequent discovery of migratory routes come to life. It was then realized that these ibises cross eight countries twice a year during their migratory flight from the Syrian desert to the Ethiopia highlands. Through satellite tracking the project has identified the two main threats causing the high mortality of immature ibises along western Arabia — hunting and electrocution by power cables.

Hunting at breeding grounds in Syria was restricted through the remarkable efforts of the General Commission for Badia Management and Development in Syria, IUCN's implementing partner. Minimizing disturbances by people during breeding is still an ongoing effort as interest about the birds attracts many visitors and eco-tourists every year.

The ibis conservation efforts were undertaken through a joint effort between the General Commission for Badia Management and Development in Syria, IUCN ROWA, BirdLife Middle East and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and funded by the Italian Cooperation (DGCS).



Northern Bald Ibis, Ethiopian highlands

Working with members

COOPERATION WITH SAUDI WILDLIFE COMMISSION

In 2010, IUCN ROWA and the Saudi Wildlife Commission (SWC) extended their 20-year partnership in protected areas management to address the need for biodiversity conservation in Saudi Arabia. The partnership mainly focuses on effective implementation of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) obligations.

Since 2009, the IUCN ROWA Protected Areas team and the SWC team have been working together on several key documents for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in collaboration with the IUCN Environmental Law Centre. The first two documents were the national strategy on access and benefit sharing in relation to genetic resources and the strategic plan for the collection and documentation of biodiversity-related traditional knowledge and practices.

SWC and IUCN ROWA have also worked on initiating the development of an invasive alien species strategy assessment of potential climate change in Saudi Arabia. In addition, both parties are in the process of finalizing a report on the Saker Falcon conservation status and research requirements.



ASSESSMENT OF PALESTINIAN FORESTS AND NATURAL RESERVES

Following a recently conducted assessment by the UNEP Regional Office for West Asia and the Environmental Quality Authority in Palestine to identify key environmental priorities in Palestine, IUCN ROWA joined forces with UNEP in November 2009 to initiate a project that will technically support the implementation of identified priorities. This has been achieved through developing an assessment for Palestinian forests and natural reserves, which was conducted during January-March 2010 by IUCN ROWA, with funding from UNEP and in collaboration with the Environmental Quality Authority and the Ministry of Agriculture of the Palestinian National Authority.

The assessment aimed to assess and compare the biodiversity, ecosystem services and resources, pressures and threats, management constraints and stakeholders of 26 out of 48 known nature reserves in the Occupied Palestinian Authority. As a result, 22 candidate protected areas (CPAs) were assessed based on the analysis of documents, site visits, interviews with local and national authorities and stakeholders, and using international best practice methodologies. This resulted in a priority list for the initiation of PA management in the following areas (ordered by importance): (1) Jerusalem Wilderness, (2) Wadi Sarqa Al-Elwey, (3) Shoubash, (4) Jabal-Alkabeer, (5) Tammoun, (6) Al-Hashmee, (7) Um Al-Saffa, (8) Ein Darra, (9) Wadi Al-Dilb, (10) Sirris, (11) Suba.

The assessment showed that the legal and policy basis is improving, the general institutional setup is sound, and that there are numerous national strategies with cross-cuttings with protected areas issues. However, there is a crucial lack of capacity among existing institutions to initiate protected areas system development, primarily due to a lack of funding.

Additionally, the assessment derived recommendations regarding potential amendments to draft legislations, development of the institutional and staff capacity of designated management authorities, as well as methods and tools for protected areas system development, management, communication and collaboration with other stakeholders. The results of the assessment were discussed with a wide spectrum of national stakeholders at a workshop held in March 2010.

PARTICIPATION IN THE CBD COP10 IN NAGOYA

The IUCN ROWA Protected Areas team participated in the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP10) that took place in Nagoya, Japan, October 18-29, 2010. IUCN's delegation to Nagoya consisted of 97 persons including councilors, commission members, representatives of IUCN national committees and the global and regional secretariat members.

IUCN prepared eight position papers for the CBD COP10 including papers on policy priorities for IUCN and on issues in which IUCN has a particular interest based on the extensive work achieved throughout the years. IUCN organised, co-hosted and participated in a number of side and special events during the two weeks of COP10. Apart from IUCN events during the COP meeting, a luncheon session on Long-term Sustainable Development of the Iraqi Marshlands and Natural Reserves was held by the Iraqi Ministry of Environment within the framework of the UNEP-UNESCO joint project on "Natural and Cultural Management of the Iraqi Marshlands" funded by the Government of Italy.

IUCN ROWA Protected Areas Programme Officer Khaldoun Alomari has delivered a presentation during the session on "Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management in the Iraqi Marshlands – Screening Study on Potential World Heritage Nomination". This presentation was done based on the key findings of the final report that was developed by IUCN ROWA in collaboration with the UNEP-UNESCO joint initiative. The presentation summarized the main findings of the screening study, highlighting the biodiversity value of the Iraqi marshlands with special emphasis on the challenges and opportunities for biodiversity conservation in the Iraqi Marshlands.



[Working with members](#)

REVIVING TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE THROUGH HIMA

Hima is a traditional system of land management that started with the nomadic tribes of Arabia. During the Islamic era, this conservation system benefited the public good in societies and survived for more than 1,400 years.

In 2010, IUCN ROWA facilitated a technical session on Hima during the WANA Forum which was held in Jordan. The aim of this session was to revive the traditional knowledge that has been used since pre-Islamic times to manage protected areas and to come up with a revised version of the Hima publication.

The Ministry of Environment and IUCN are supporting environmental organisations and other partners in efforts to conserve and manage the rich biodiversity heritage that is still present in Jordan, but under severe pressure of being degraded. IUCN has submitted a proposal to the ministry that seeks to strengthen local capacities to protect and manage biodiversity-rich areas outside the formal government designated protected areas. The programme proposes developing different modalities in different parts of Jordan where such different conditions prevail.

It is worth mentioning that IUCN ROWA and partners organised a regional workshop several years ago on the revival of Hima in the 21st century. The workshop proposed a roadmap to advance Hima through developing the knowledge, policies and implementation of this concept. The workshop produced a publication titled "Hima: A Way of Life", in three languages: English, French and Arabic. This publication is now used as an important tool to spread knowledge and awareness.

Working with members

GUIDELINES FOR APPLYING PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT CATEGORIES NOW IN ARABIC

Building on the conservation efforts undertaken by IUCN in the West Asia region, IUCN partnered with the Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve (DDCR) to promote nature conservation and the equitable and ecologically sustainable use of natural resources in the United Arab Emirates. This partnership was officially announced through a memorandum of understanding that was signed recently between both parties to institutionalize this partnership.

A number of activities and programmes will be developed jointly between the IUCN and DDCR including knowledge exchange, technical support, capacity building and the development of joint projects and programmes in the UAE. As a first step, DDCR has agreed to support the Arabic translation and production of the IUCN publication "*Guidelines for applying protected area management categories*", which has been translated and is planned to be launched in 2011.



PARTICIPATION IN THE FIRST CONFERENCE ON BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA

The IUCN ROWA Protected Areas team participated in the 11th Conservation Workshop for the Fauna of Arabia and First Conference on Biodiversity Conservation in the Arabian Peninsula which was held in Sharjah, UAE in January 2010. A technical paper on protected areas in the West Asia region was presented and submitted by IUCN ROWA at the conference.

According to the IUCN paper there are approximately 230 protected areas in the Arabian Peninsula today (or 894 when adjacent areas such as Egypt, Iran and Turkey are taken into account) covering an estimated 15 per cent of the land area. A few countries like Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Jordan have extensive protected area networks, while only 5 per cent of the lands in Turkey, Kuwait, Syria, Qatar, Lebanon, and Iraq are occupied by protected areas.



Socotra Island, Yemen

The technical paper referred to the lack of a rationalized network of effectively managed protected areas as one of the key concerns in the Arabian region. Moreover, major issues facing protected areas management in the Arabian Peninsula - insufficient technical capacity of protected areas staff, protected areas planning and management, wildlife management, and environmental sociology - are not yet widely recognized by the region's academic institutions. In addition, there exists a weak legislative basis for protected areas in the region.

Four future priority steps were recommended in the paper to further develop protected area networks in the region including addressing the impacts of climate change, particularly through developing landscape-level initiatives that link protected areas with other land uses, expanding protected areas in poorly represented biomes, strengthening management effectiveness through capacity building and protected areas financing, in addition to the involvement of local communities in protected area design and management.

The paper, which was written by IUCN ROWA Protected Areas Officer Khaldoun Alomari, was published in the volume on "Biodiversity Conservation in the Arabian Peninsula", which appeared as the special focus of the journal *Zoology in the Middle East* in cooperation with the Sharjah Environment and Protected Areas Authority.

STRENGTHENING ECO-TOURISM IN OMAN

Oman holds extraordinary diversity in its bio-climatic regions, geological formations, biological diversity, and natural and cultural heritage. Altogether these create enormous opportunities for several types of tourism experiences, most importantly eco-tourism. In line with the Ministry of Tourism strategy to enhance eco-tourism as its strategic choice, and in its plans for enforcing more responsible tourism operations, IUCN ROWA has built a partnership with the ministry to provide technical assistance and guidance for strengthening Oman's national eco-tourism sector and the development of a pilot project in the Bandar Khiran, an area which was assigned by a Royal Decree as a public eco-tourism site.

Bandar Khiran is frequented by visitors from different backgrounds and countries for the purposes of recreation, leisure and adventure. These diverse tourism activities are expected to result in friction between visitors and local communities, particularly where urban and foreign customs may clash with local traditions and cultures. There is, therefore, a clear need to spatially organize the use of Bandar Khiran and to ensure that visitor activities do not result in a deterioration of the natural environment. Bandar Khiran is also valued for its coastal and marine biodiversity and is characterized by coastal cliffs with scattered narrow sandy beaches. However, several human impacts on marine resources have been documented in this area.

The overall aim of this project is promoting sound and sustainable local and national economic development within an environmentally sound approach. The project is working on strengthening the capacities of governmental and non-governmental institutions in the areas of eco-tourism planning and natural resource management. Promoting a long-term community and multi-stakeholder involvement and partnership is a major aspect that will be taken into account when implementing the project. Moreover, education, awareness raising and training are major components that will further support the project's implementation.

In 2010, several missions to Oman were undertaken by an IUCN ROWA team in coordination with the Omani Ministry of Tourism to prepare the eco-tourism and site management development plans for Bandar Khiran.



Bandar Khiran area, Oman

YEMEN LNG MARINE BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION STRATEGY

A strategic collaboration between Total Corporation, Total Foundation and IUCN in support of the work of Yemen LNG has emerged to support the planning and implementation of the Yemen LNG Marine Biodiversity Protection (MBP) Strategy, which is an integral component of the company's overall Sustainable Development and Environment (SDE) Strategy. The strategy has three distinct levels of action undertaken in close consultation with concerned stakeholders: minimizing and mitigating any possible harm or damage, whether to populations, wildlife or the environment; providing proper offset or compensation to international standards where impact cannot be fully redressed; and establishing a positive and enduring legacy in Yemen.



Yemen LNG Project site

Yemen LNG is involved in a large-scale project which includes construction and operation of a liquefied natural gas plant in the area of Balhaf, Yemen. The IUCN Global Marine Programme and IUCN ROWA Marine Programme have been actively involved with Yemen LNG to design and manage an independent review process of their marine biodiversity action plan. Specifically, the agreement is to obtain an independent third-party assessment of the company's strategy for marine biodiversity protection as implemented through its biodiversity action plan.

Modeled in part on Decision 258 of the Governing Council of the UN Compensation Commission for the independent review of the implementation of environmental restoration projects, following damages inflicted by the 1990 Iraqi aggression in Kuwait, IUCN has developed an independent review monitoring programme that includes expertise in fisheries, coral reefs, marine ecosystem restoration, marine protected areas, oil and gas pollution, and impact assessment. The initial phase is scheduled to last for three years (from 2009 to 2011) and produce up to six reports. Based on review of documentation, the independent review panel reports biannually on the status of the company's marine biodiversity activities. These reports are made available to the company's senior management, officials in the Yemeni Ministry of Oil and Minerals and the senior management team at IUCN.

Through this independent environmental auditing process, the company hopes not only to improve its performance with respect to environmental and social aspects of its marine biodiversity strategy, but also to demonstrate the actual work done on the ground to its board and other stakeholders. It is worth noting that the major shareholders in the Yemen LNG Company include Total (40 per cent), Hunt (17 per cent), Yemen Gas Company (17 per cent) and SK Corporation (10 per cent). Total is also the project leader.

UNDERSTANDING MARINE WORLD HERITAGE

In June 2010, IUCN ROWA Marine Programme participated in the Marine World Heritage experts' workshop that was held in Germany by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation in cooperation with IUCN, IUCN WCPA Marine and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. The workshop, titled "*Understanding Marine World Heritage: A Contribution to the Implementation of the Bahrain Action Plan*", was held to follow up on the Bahrain Action Plan resulting from a previous marine world heritage workshop held in Bahrain in early 2009. The action plan proposes priorities for marine world heritage and ways to enhance the role of the World Heritage Convention in the conservation and management of global oceans and seas.

One of the five major actions called for in the Bahrain Action Plan was the development of an IUCN thematic study on marine world heritage that will provide the World Heritage Center and contracting parties with the scientific basis for identifying new potential marine World Heritage sites.

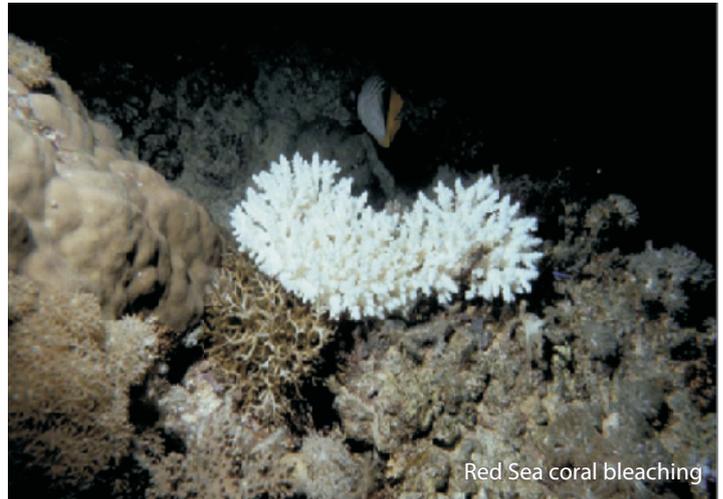
The workshop elaborated on the IUCN thematic study to seek further regional and thematic input from additional contributors which will result in developing a concrete roadmap for the elaboration of this study.

IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON CORAL AND REEFS

In an aim to review the status of coral in the Arabian – Persian Gulf and outline key priority actions needed for managing those sensitive ecosystems, a regional workshop on the impacts of climate change on coral, heat-resistant coral and artificial reefs was held in Tehran, Iran in June 2010. The workshop was organised by the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) with the participation of key experts from IUCN, UNEP and relevant environmental governmental and non-governmental organizations in the West Asia region.

IUCN representatives from the West Asia Marine Programme addressed the importance of understanding and enhancing coral reef resilience in the face of climate change and identified the characteristics and features of resilient coral presenting a case study from the Red Sea in terms of

resilience indicators and conservation priorities. IUCN also highlighted a number of key messages concerning the opportunity that climate change created to seize the chance for better management — the hope for better managed reefs and prioritizing conservation issues when time and funds are limited. The ROPME member states agreed on adopting the IUCN methodology to identify vulnerable and resilient coral reefs in preparation to address the climate change impacts on coral reefs' ecosystems.



FINAL REGIONAL MEETING OF THE SECOND CYCLE OF PERIODIC REPORTING

Being the advisory body for Natural World Heritage to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, IUCN through the West Asia World Heritage Focal Point participated in the Final Regional Meeting for the Second Cycle of the Periodic Reporting exercise in the Arab States Parties was organised in Algiers from 1 to 4 February 2010. The meeting was attended by the Focal Points of 14 States Parties as well as by the Advisory Bodies (IUCN, ICOMOS and ICCROM), ALECSO, UNESCO field offices in the region and the World Heritage Centre. The scope of the meeting was to assess the Periodic Reporting exercise and propose recommendations for sub-regional action plans. During the discussions, the participants reflected on the challenges and strengths of the exercise and its usefulness to safeguarding the World Heritage in the Arab Region. Following up on this meeting, the state parties continued working closely with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to further develop the Action Plans into an operational regional programme including priorities, time tables, and budgetary implications for the Arab States that were tailored to sub-regional needs.

TRAINING ON THE PREPARATION OF WORLD HERITAGE DOSSIER LIST

The African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) in conjunction with Algerian Ministry of Culture organized a two-week training course on the preparation of nomination dossiers for World Heritage listings for Arab-speaking African countries in November 2010. The training aimed at familiarizing participants with the World Heritage Convention, its criteria, main concepts and terms. IUCN provided an introduction to the World Heritage Convention and the concept of outstanding universal values (OUV) from the perspective of nature. This workshop was organized in response to the need for far greater representation of Africa's rich cultural and natural heritage on the prestigious World Heritage List. As one of its key priorities, the AWHF mobilized resources to put in place a training programme for building the level of competence amongst African heritage professionals in developing nomination dossiers that meet the criteria of the World Heritage Convention.

TRAINING ON THE WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION PROCESS OF THE MARSHLANDS

In June 2010, a training workshop was held in Turkey on the World Heritage Nomination Process of the Marshlands of Mesopotamia in Iraq. Facilitated by World Heritage focal points in IUCN ROWA, UNESCO and UNEP, the training built Iraqi capacities to enhance the Mesopotamia site in an aim to meet the necessary criteria in terms of protection, management and integrity. The training was organised and funded by the UNESCO Iraq office and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The IUCN World Heritage focal point introduced the World Heritage Convention and main characteristics of the natural site to participants, addressing the most important aspects of the nomination process.

Effective Management of Water and Drylands

In 2006, IUCN ROWA started the three-year WESCANA Water Project, funded by DGCS/Italy, to develop systemic approaches to sustainable freshwater management in the West, Central Asia and North Africa (WESCANA) region, in addition to encouraging relevant conducive policies. This project was necessary due to the combination of three factors: scarcity of water resources, absence of a systemic approach for water management in the region and lack of effective ties with global water initiatives and institutions. The project has formed the base for a multi-donor funded regional water programme implemented by IUCN ROWA. This regional water programme, presented as REWARD (Regional Water Resources and Drylands), a challenging innovative programme, is one of IUCN ROWA's three thematic programme areas.



Working with members

SECURING RIGHTS AND RESTORING LANDS FOR IMPROVED LIVELIHOODS

In 2010, IUCN ROWA started the implementation of the Securing Rights and Restoring Lands for Improved Livelihoods project in Jordan, focusing on four pilot areas around the east areas of the Zarqa River Basin, one of the environmental hot spots in Jordan. The three-year-project is part of a global initiative covering several countries including Botswana, Jordan, Mali, and Sudan. Funded by the European Union, the project aims at poverty

reduction, sustainable management and restoration of ecosystems in drylands and rangelands.

IUCN ROWA is implementing the project in Jordan in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Arab Women's Organization, targeting the local rural drylands communities in Jordan (Mafraq and Zarqa), local authorities, CBOs and NGOs. The Ministry of Water and Irrigation and the Ministry of Environment, as the key stakeholders, will be closely involved in the project.

The project is expected to achieve a number of results that local communities will benefit from at the local and global levels, with special attention to those important to women and vulnerable groups. The project will explore economic and income-generating options for rural communities based on natural resource commodities and on valuations of ecosystem services. The project will also inform and influence policies to support sustainable management of drylands and rangelands at the local, national, regional, and global levels.

A number of activities and plans are being developed to build the capacities of local communities and their institutions in managing and restoring their ecosystems, improving their marketing activities and providing participatory management models between local communities and the government around their natural pastoral reserves. The project will also support multi-stakeholders' dialogues to share, negotiate and agree on common understanding, knowledge, ideas, and priorities which will feed in updating the rangeland strategy.



Zarqa River, Jordan

Working with members

ZARQA RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT

For decades the Zarqa River in Jordan has been heavily polluted by untreated domestic and industrial wastewater, as well as solid waste. Ground and surface water is pumped for agriculture, reducing surface and spring flow to the river. But action is being taken. The municipality of Zarqa, the ministries of environment, water, and agriculture, and IUCN ROWA are working together to help restore the Zarqa River through the Institutional Capacity-Building Project for the Zarqa River Restoration. Through a participatory stakeholder dialogue the project has planned its activities around four pilot sites in Ruseifa, Zawahra, Shomar and Kaouf as part of the road map to rehabilitate the river.

The pilot projects are expected to demonstrate the positive impact of effective planning and relationship management on local communities, the private sector and respective governmental departments. This will further improve water resource management and river rehabilitation in those areas. The pilot sites will focus on reducing pollution and dumping waste in the river, improving the environmental and livelihood situation, promoting effective governance and greening the area through improving the agricultural situation alongside the river.

The three-year-project is implemented by Ministry of Environment in Jordan and IUCN ROWA and funded by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation. It is considered the cornerstone for implementing the Zarqa River Restoration Strategy developed by both partners. The project has established a specialized unit for the restoration project within the structure of the ministry.

A series of workshops, stakeholder dialogues and public awareness campaigns were conducted targeting local stakeholders and local communities on hot spots of the river area to come up with local strategic plans that will feed into the rehabilitation of the Zarqa river. Two schools were selected within the river basin to raise students' awareness on river rehabilitation and water management.



The rehabilitation processes of the land downstream King Talal Dam, Jordan



Moreover, a number of committees were established at the national and local levels to facilitate the decision-making process, empower local communities and increase their participation in decision making at the local level and create ownership and accountability towards the protection of the river.

IUCN worked in coordination with local NGOs and CBOs such as the Ruseifa Women Workers Society, Sehan Voluntary Society and Jordan Bar Association, in addition to governmental agencies which developed a training needs assessment and a training programme for project partners.

Based on training needs assessment results, three key IUCN publications on river restoration and ecosystem management were translated to Arabic namely-"Flow", "Pay", and "The Ecosystem Approach". The three publications were launched by IUCN and the Ministry of Environment during the 10th Anniversary of the Earth Charter for North Africa and Middle East Region that took place in November 2010 in Jordan. The celebration was organized by the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD) and Earth Charter global initiative in partnership with and funding by the Ministry of Environment and IUCN ROWA.

Several partnerships were established with other projects and institutions as part of the Zarqa River project. The partnerships resulted in two main projects that are being implemented within the Zarqa River Basin, one of them is the sustainable utilization of treated wastewater for income generation and poverty alleviation in part of the east Zarqa city project, implemented by the Jordanian Society for Organic Farming, and the Water and Food Security Project is implemented by the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD).

Working with members

TRAINING WORKSHOP ON ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION

Law enforcement is considered a crucial measure that needs to be taken into consideration in parallel with creating social change towards best environmental practices. This requires building the capacities of lawyers and judges to become more aware of environmental legislation and the impact of environmental law enforcement on local communities.

More than 150 lawyers, judges and other relevant stakeholders in Jordan

were trained on environmental legislation within a series of workshops that were organized by the IUCN Zarqa River Restoration Project in partnership with the Jordan Bar Association, the Ministry of Environment and the Rangers. The workshop was enriched by the technical support of a number of lawyers and legal experts in Jordan; among them Mrs. Israa AlTurk, a lawyer and an active member of IUCN Commission on Environmental Law (CEL).

This workshop is part of a series of workshops that IUCN has conducted in cooperation with the Jordan Bar Association. A field visit to the Zarqa River Basin was organized as part of the workshop to address the severe pollution threatening the river. After the second training workshop, two out of twenty-two lawsuits recorded in local Jordanian courts were successfully won against environmental violators in the Zarqa River area. The workshop has also resulted in a number of actions by elevating this issue to the parliamentary level, particularly through the parliamentary committee that supports national environmental legislation in Jordan.



Awareness activity in Zarqa area in an aim to raise the awareness of Zarqa relevant stakeholders including end-users on environmental laws and legislations



Azraq Oasis, Jordan

Working with members

AZRAQ OASIS RESTORATION PROJECT

Increasing water demands in water-scarce Jordan are putting pressure on one of the country's largest groundwater basins, the Azraq Oasis. Intensive pumping carried out over the past 20 years has caused a lowering of the basin's water table, leading to increased salinity of the area's soil. Over-extraction has also led to the drying up of springs, spurring wildfires across an increasingly dry environment. Agricultural expansion, urban growth and environmental needs all tap into the dwindling water resources, further deteriorating water quality and quantity in the region.



Azraq local communities in the field, Jordan

The Azraq Oasis is a unique ecosystem in a fragile environment where the remaining wetland is recognized as a RAMSAR site that is especially important for migratory birds. It contains a wealth of biodiversity and habitats, and the richest habitat of all exists in its wetlands, which are extremely rare in the region.

As part of the Regional Water Resources and Drylands Programme (REWARD) demonstration sites, IUCN ROWA has been implementing the Azraq Oasis Project in Jordan to support the equitable management of water resources by building the capacity of the different stakeholders and

assisting in improving water resource management for agricultural production and environmental sustainability. This is done through enhancing participatory processes of sustainable water management as a continuous dialogue of all the different water users. Moreover, it builds on the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) approach in implementing its programmes to come up with pragmatic solutions for the Azraq area.

The project has a special gender component funded by the EU and implemented by IUCN and the Arab Women's Organisation (AWO). Through this component, the project pushed forward advocacy efforts for the benefit of women to develop a model for more active involvement in decision-making processes in the water sector in Jordan. An awareness campaign was designed and implemented through the AWO to raise the stakeholders' awareness on their roles and responsibilities as well as on other technical related issues.

IUCN has also been working in partnership with the Badia Research Programme (BRP) on developing a Decision Support Systems (DSS) — a credible and user-friendly information system — on agricultural patterns to facilitate the decision-making process concerning the management of Azraq Oasis activities. This tool was designed in coordination with key national stakeholders and was tested and validated before being used as a formal tool for watershed management.

Several strategic meetings were held with key stakeholders at the national level to agree on the cooperation framework among stakeholders at different levels. At the local level, a water resource management committee was established, bringing together representatives from Azraq community-based organisations like cooperatives, voluntary organisations, women's organizations, and community and governmental departments in Azraq. This step facilitated the process of

community engagement with the governmental authorities in terms of consultation, planning, decision making and implementation of water resource initiatives at the governorate/district and oasis levels. A local water resource management strategic plan was also developed by the Azraq local water committee in line with national strategic directions.

As part of the Azraq project, two pilot projects were implemented in targeted areas funded by Mercy Corps (a USAID-funded organization) to test solutions for the restoration of Azraq Oasis. The pilot projects were based on priorities of local stakeholders and on the analysis and needs assessment developed by the project. The first project developed a number of experimental farms with the Ministry of Agriculture in Jordan to explore alternatives for crop patterns in Azraq. The second was a study on salt water intrusion in the upper aquifer of the Azraq Basin. The study was undertaken by IUCN and the Ministry of Water and Irrigation in Jordan, which recommended the involvement of local communities in the Azraq area to develop an immediate action plan to extract the highly saline water from the aquifer for salt production.

On the other hand, the Azraq Oasis Project was adopted as a success story that can be replicated elsewhere by the Highland Water Forum, a national platform launched in May 2010 that aims at bringing together a range of stakeholders interested in the creation of new knowledge in an area of common interest. The forum has been established by the Jordanian-German Water Programme and hosted by Ministry of Water and Irrigation in order to foster capacity building, shared learning, networking and the exchange of experience between major actors in the groundwater sector in Jordan.

Azraq Oasis restoration is a multi-donor three-year project funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DGCS), IUCN Water and Nature Initiative (WANI) and the European Union in partnership with the ministries of environment, water and irrigation and agriculture, in addition to the Royal Society for Conservation of Nature (RSCN), Mercy Cops, the Badia Research Programme (BRP) and the Arab Women's Organization (AWO).



An experimental farm in the Azraq Oasis project area to explore alternatives for crop patterns

SUSTAINABLE WATER MANAGEMENT TO SECURE LIVELIHOODS IN MARJ SANOUR, PALESTINE

Due to the unsustainable land use and water management in the Marj Sanour watershed, the area suffers from water scarcity and at the same time winter flooding. Marj Sanour is a hilly area located in the southern part of Jenin Governorate. Water supply for both drinking water and irrigation purposes is mostly dependent on groundwater creating pressure on the water level. However, Marj Sanour is a valley with good agricultural potential if action is taken to better manage and harvest the surface water, which will also reduce the pressure on groundwater.

Through its project office in Palestine, IUCN has worked on a long-term watershed development plan that focuses on sustainable use of water resources and agricultural production as well as on securing livelihoods. It was implemented through a simple model for watershed development planning supported by a decision support system (DSS).

Participatory dialogues involving all relevant stakeholders were conducted regularly in Marj Sanour to design a hydrological flow for the watershed and assess the environmental and socio-economic aspects. Stakeholder dialogues resulted in forming a water-user group association for the watershed which has unified all efforts and led to a common concerted action for the seven communities in the area. The steering and technical advisory committee meetings also played a major role in ensuring effective communication among all stakeholders who will endorse the watershed development process. Moreover, and to ensure the maximum involvement of local organisations and local stakeholders, a training needs assessment was developed to identify training requirements needed for local communities in Marj Sanour.

The Marj Sanour project was supported by the Palestinian Water Authority, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Local Government and Environmental Quality Authority, and implemented by the IUCN REWARD project office in Palestine with the Palestine Hydrology Group and the Union of Agricultural Work committees. The IUCN project office in Palestine was part of the Regional Water Resources and Drylands programme (REWARD) that was funded by DGCS/Italy and DGIS/Netherlands, the latter through the IUCN Water and Nature Initiative (WANI).



Marj Sanour, Palestine

Working with members

LOCAL WATER GOVERNANCE IN EGYPT

Insufficient water management in the Beni Sueif and Minia governorates in Egypt has resulted from a lack of awareness and insufficient communication between stakeholders, in addition to the lack of monitoring and technical capacity. There was an urgent need for effective sound management of available water resources and awareness raising among stakeholders.

The IUCN REWARD Programme through the Center for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE) is working on a demonstration project in Minia and Beni Sueif which has succeeded in narrowing the gaps between water users and governmental officials by adopting a participatory stakeholder-led approach, prominently facilitating communications among water managers and users at the local level. The project has been streamlined within the strategic objectives of the Egyptian Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, and was geared to assist in poverty alleviation of rural communities.

In 2010, the project developed plans for selected rural communities to identify major needs for pilot actions. As a result, two pilot projects were implemented in two villages to improve rural livelihoods and environmental health conditions. This was done through the provision of clean drinking water to 120 poor households, management of sewage and solid waste, environmental awareness raising, and the covering of 130 meters of a polluted drain passing through residential areas. The projects were funded by the Social Fund for Development (SFD). In addition, a study on the economic return of major cultivated crops in the study area was conducted to support local communities select crops for improved livelihoods.



Local communities in Minia, Egypt

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP DURING THE FIRST ARAB WATER WEEK

The first Arab Water Week was held in Jordan December 5-9, 2010 by the Arab Countries Water Utilities Association (ACWUA) under the umbrella of the League of Arab States (LAS) and in partnership with the Arab Ministerial Water Council (AMWC) and the Jordanian Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI).

Arab Water Week (AWW), themed “Cost Recovery at Water and Wastewater Utilities: Achievements, Challenges and Solutions”, is the first regional meeting in the Arab region which has tackled water management issues through establishing innovative partnerships and platforms of collaborative work on water issues in the region. Within this partnership context and during Arab Water Week, IUCN ROWA has signed a memorandum of understanding with Arab Countries Water Utilities Association (ACWUA), a regional center of excellence founded in 2007 to provide a regional advocacy platform for water supply and wastewater utilities in Arab countries.



This partnership is expected to enhance policy debates and coordination within the water supply and sanitation sector of Arab countries through ACWUA's network. IUCN ROWA will support the development of systemic approaches on integrated water resource management (IWRM) to enhance the well-being of local residents and their livelihoods. The parties will undertake a number of activities in the areas of capacity building on the systemic approaches of IWRM, water governance, management tools for shared water resources and policy influence.

REALITY AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSBOUNDARY WATER MANAGEMENT

Around 40% of the world's population lives in transboundary settings. Several countries in the West Asia region share transboundary water aquifers and rivers which may create reasons for political conflict among these countries. Therefore, there is a vital need to develop regional strategies to manage the shared water resources, especially with the continuous increase in population growth and the resulting increase in demand for water.

The UNESCO Amman Office has organized a training workshop on transboundary water management in partnership with IUCN ROWA July 25-29, 2010 in Jordan. Participants were trained to apply different effective tools and participatory methodologies in shared

water resources such as the problem tree, stakeholder analysis, initial visioning, and water resource infrastructure, demand and access (RIDA). The workshop shed light on global and regional success stories on transboundary water management. Twenty Jordanian and Syrian participants from different governmental and non-governmental organizations are participating in this workshop.



Jabal Al Sheikh, Al Beqa' transboundary area between Lebanon and Syria

BUILDING THE CAPACITIES ON REGIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS

Recent reports announced that Arab countries are among the world's most vulnerable to climate change impacts, which vary from aridity, recurrent droughts, water scarcity, and increase in average temperatures. Reaching common ground in the region is urgently needed when it comes to climate change adaptation and mitigation. IUCN ROWA has built a strategic partnership with the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) and the Center for Environment and Development in the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE) to build the capacities of climate change experts in the Arab region.

In 2010, two regional workshops were held on climate change by IUCN, ISESCO and CEDARE and funded by the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) focusing on two main themes. The first workshop, which was held in Egypt,

focused on climate change environmental indicators in the Arab region. The main objectives of this workshop were defining the concept of environmental indicators, with special emphasis on biodiversity and climate change vulnerability, exploring the different avenues related to environmental Indicators, and sharing experiences, insights and knowledge on examples of environmental indicators.

The second workshop was held in Jordan and focused on climate change monitoring and metrology systems. This workshop aimed at creating a platform for regional experts to generate a common Arab scientific discourse concerning monitoring and metrology systems. The workshop addressed issues of climate and monitoring tools and meteorological data systems. Participants shared their experiences and case studies on climate change impacts on natural resources and ecosystems in the region.



Climate change monitoring and metrology systems workshop, Jordan

Gender and Climate Change



National Workshop on Gender and Climate Change – Towards a Gender Programme on Climate Change in Jordan

JORDAN FIRST ARAB COUNTRY TO MAINSTREAM GENDER IN CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

Jordan was one of the first developing countries to respond to climate change challenges by signing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In this regard, the Jordanian Ministry of Environment, in cooperation with IUCN ROWA and the Office of the IUCN Senior Global Gender Adviser, has organized a national workshop titled “Gender and Climate Change – Towards a Gender Programme on Climate Change in Jordan”. The workshop was held November 1-3, 2010 in Amman as part of a work programme implemented through the Global Gender Climate Alliance (GGCA), of which IUCN is a founding member. The hosting of the workshop was made possible through the generous financial support given by the government of Finland.

Participants at the workshop focused on exploring mechanisms and entry points through which gender considerations could be included in the Third National Communication (TNC) report to be delivered to the UNFCCC. The report will be based on four priority areas identified within the context of adaptation and mitigation, i.e. water, energy, agriculture and waste, and from which Jordan will be seeking funding from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) as funding mechanism to the UNFCCC for these projects. The report will also include social dimensions such as gender. With the adoption of this programme Jordan will become the first Arab country to mainstream gender in its national climate change policy.

The convening of the workshop in Amman is groundbreaking and seen as a clear indication that the government of Jordan has recognized that women and men experience the impacts of climate change differently, and that existing gender inequalities lessen women’s capacity to cope with this change.

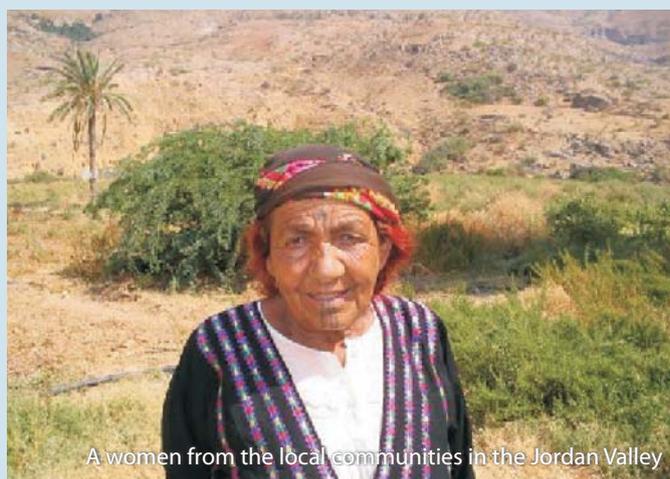
The program was adopted by Jordan’s National Commission for Women for the next five years. The Jordanian Program on Gender and Climate Change will be launched by the government in 2011.

Working with members

TRAINING LOCAL COMMUNITIES ON GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Worldwide data has proven that by mainstreaming gender equality into climate change initiatives, we can enhance our efforts in reducing vulnerabilities and become more efficient and effective in our solutions — peace and security, and natural resource management.

In August 2010, IUCN ROWA and the Arab Women's Organization in Jordan conducted a training course on gender and climate change for community-based organizations (CBO) and women's groups, empowering them to be catalysts of change in their communities. The training was funded by the Global Women's Fund.



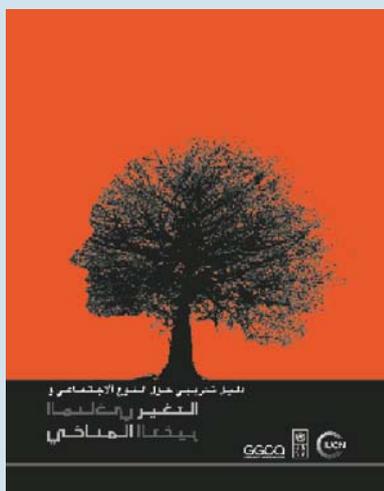
A women from the local communities in the Jordan Valley

Twenty participants from different CBOs and women's groups were trained to develop the necessary skills to complement their existing programmes with a more political programme of active engagement with local governments and service providers. The CBOs will then act as a platform for women activists who wish to exercise their rights and thus enable them to define procedures and criteria to measure if gender considerations have been taken into account when talking about climate change. This step facilitated the process of mainstreaming gender into Jordan's programme on Climate Change and Jordan's Third National Communication Report to the UNFCCC.

The IUCN training manual on gender and climate change was successfully used throughout the training programme. This manual has been successfully applied at regional levels all around the world including Arab countries to expand knowledge of social and technical expert groups to assert the rights of women to climate change impacts.

Working with members

TRANSLATING THE IUCN GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE MANUAL



IUCN ROWA in cooperation with the Arab Women's Organization (AWO) and the Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA) has translated the IUCN Gender and Climate Change Manual into Arabic which is expected to be launched in early 2011. The manual will be used for the first time in a training of trainers on gender and climate change in the Arab region that is planned for February 2011. The Arabic translation and printing of this publication was funded by the Global Fund for Women. This manual is considered the first Arabic manual that will work on building a strong and qualified Arab team that works jointly with Arab governments to mainstream gender in the national and regional climate change policies. According to the training manual, which was authored by the IUCN Global Senior Gender Advisor, Lorena Aguilar, the impacts of climate change will hit hardest the poorest regions and the poorest people who have the least resources for facing the changes brought by increasing droughts, floods or storms. Seventy percent of these poor are women.

PARTICIPATION IN THE CANCUN UNFCCC COP16

IUCN ROWA joined the IUCN delegation to the 16th Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Cancun, Mexico, which took place 29 November to 10 December. IUCN ROWA Gender Focal Point, Fidaa Haddad has participated in the delegates' meeting on gender and climate change, which was held as an updating session for UNFCCC government delegates on developing gender-sensitive national implementation strategies for climate change.

Fifty-nine government delegates and civil society representatives, representing twenty-nine countries from all regions of the world, participated in the updating session on new dimensions of gender and climate change. IUCN Global Gender Advisor Lorena Aguilar described the methodology of developing gender-sensitive national implementation strategies for climate change.

Representatives of governments from Mozambique, Jordan, Central America, and Finland presented their experiences in developing groundbreaking national and regional strategies on gender and climate change. The session concluded with an integrative discussion that highlighted best practices, opportunities, challenges, and concrete strategies and the final remarks on behalf of the Arab Countries and the League of Arab State was done by the government of Egypt.

On the other hand, an international forum was held in Mexico prior to the UNFCCC COP16, jointly organized by the Government of Mexico: SEMARNAT, INE, SRE, INMUJERES, CGPC-SEGOB, SEGOB, UNDP, and the HBF in collaboration with the GGCA. The forum contributed to the development of recommendations and proposals for integrating gender and human rights into climate change adaptation, mitigation and financing negotiations during and beyond COP16, at the international and national levels. During the forum, IUCN ROWA has provided a platform for Arab countries to present their progress on gender mainstreaming, where Jordan's gender and climate change program was presented. This forum brought together international and national: government officials, civil society and experts on gender and sustainable development, academics and international organizations from diverse regions and sectors.



Iran forest

Communications



First winner of the Investigative Environmental Media Award Ms Najat Shana'a from Al Sabeel Newspaper, Jordan

IUCN CELEBRATES BIODIVERSITY YEAR AND HONORS MEDIA AWARD WINNER

Four winners of the Investigative Environmental Media Award were honored by IUCN ROWA during the Jordanian celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity 2010, which was organized by Ministry of Environment on 24 May, 2010. The media award for the best investigative report on the environmental situation in the Zarqa River Basin was announced in Jordan by IUCN ROWA in February 2010 in cooperation with Ministry of Environment through the Zarqa River Restoration Project and funded by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) and UNESCO Amman Office.

This award was launched following a training course on Media for Sustainable Development which was held for Jordanian journalists in December 2009. Specifically, a press trip was organized as part of the media training to the severely polluted Zarqa River Basin in Jordan. Participants were introduced to the serious ecosystem degradation and pollution facing the Zarqa River Basin. Participants were introduced to stories of local communities living alongside the river and how such environmental deterioration is substantially destroying people's lives and health.

SUPPORTING IUCN DELEGATION TO CITES COP10 IN DOHA

With 175 parties, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) is one of the world's most powerful tools for biodiversity conservation. IUCN was instrumental in creating the convention and continues to provide technical and scientific advice on species of concern. A strong IUCN delegation attended the CITES 15th Conference of Parties meeting in Doha, Qatar to assist the parties to make scientifically based and well-informed decisions. IUCN ROWA communications officer accompanied the global IUCN delegation to the CITES meeting in March 2010 and, jointly with the global communications team, organized a press trip to the Shahaniya Oryx Centre on the outskirts of Doha.



The Shahaniya Oryx Centre, Qatar

International, regional, and national Qatari press and media institutions as well as IUCN experts participated in this press trip which was organized in collaboration with Ministry of Environment and Friends of the Environment Center (IUCN member) in Qatar. The trip was widely covered in the Qatari news, quoting IUCN species experts and CITES delegation members.



PROMOTING MEDIA AS PARTNERS IN ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Realizing the importance of the media in shaping public opinions and in being a catalyst of change in addressing root causes of ecological degradation, IUCN ROWA and UNESCO Amman Office held a four-day training workshop titled "Media as Partners in Education for Sustainable Development: Role of Social Media in Sustainable Development" which was held in Jordan October 24-27, 2010. The training gathered 20 Jordanian journalists and media professionals who were trained on environmental and sustainable development reporting techniques.

The training utilized the UNESCO's Media Training and Resource Kit, which attempts to provide media professionals with basic information about prominent priority issues for sustainable

development. It also provides practical exercises to inspire investigative reporting, and draws links to existing experience which may enrich information resources of media professionals. Issues like climate change, biodiversity, extinction, resource depletion as well as other environmental challenges were addressed throughout the training. In addition, presentations from active community members in Jordan were delivered to showcase real grass-root level efforts in regards to sustainable development.

On the other hand, the role of social media in sustainable development was addressed on the third day using hands-on training in the use of social media and multimedia tools to raise awareness on sustainable development issues. A social network was created among the participants as part of the training workshop, where all participants became members of this network and learned how to utilize and harness this entity to promote environmental awareness.

The case of Aramex International, a leading company that has a strong greening policy, was also addressed on the last day of the training through a field trip to Aramex premises, where participants learned about the role of the private sector in greening the economy and reducing their ecological footprints.

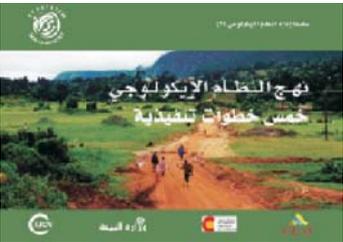
EYE ON BIODIVERSITY

The IUCN ROWA communications unit produced several awareness-raising materials in celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity 2010 such as calendars, roll-up banners, bags and folders. The communications material was widely disseminated among the IUCN network and during ROWA's events and workshops.

In addition, several articles and news stories were shared widely with the ROWA media list and published in newspapers and magazines on the importance of biodiversity and nature conservation.



IUCN ARABIC TRANSLATED PUBLICATIONS

	Pay (Arabic) دفع القيمة
	Flow (Arabic) الجريان
	The Ecosystem Approach (Arabic) نهج النظام الإيكولوجي
	Gender and Climate Change Manual (Arabic) دليل تدريب حول النوع الاجتماعي والتغير المناخي
	Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories (Arabic) الخطوط الإرشادية لتطبيق التصنيفات الإدارية للمناطق المحمية



WISP Policy Note No. 8
Forgotten Services, Diminished Goods: understanding the agro-ecosystem of
pastoralism
المبادرة العالمية للرعي المستدام (WISP) المذكرة السياسية رقم 8
خدمات تُسيب وسليح تلاشت: فهم النظام الإيكولوجي الزراعي لتربية المواشي



WISP Policy Note No. 9
Sustainable Pastoralism – Moving forward with appropriate policies
المبادرة العالمية للرعي المستدام (WISP) المذكرة السياسية رقم 9
الرعي المستدام- تطوير سياسات ملائمة

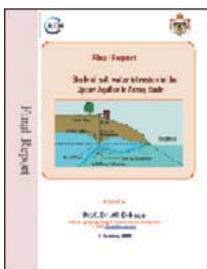
IUCN ROWA STUDIES AND ASSESSMENTS



Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management in the Iraqi Marshlands
Screening Study on Potential World Heritage Nomination



Assessment of some Palestinian Forests and Natural Reserves
Final Report



Study of Salt Water Intrusion in the Upper Aquifer in Azraq Basin
Final Report

IUCN Governance Structure

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Ms. Mehrasa Mehrdadi (RCWA Secretary)	Expert for Protected Areas & Habitats Bureau	Department of Environment	mehr_1975@yahoo.com	Iran
Mr. Osama Al Nouri (RCWA Treasurer)	General Secretary	The Syrian Society for the Conservation of Wildlife	sscw.syria@gmail.com	Syria
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Dr. Talal Al Azimi (RCWA Member)	Director	Environment Public Authority	talal@epa.org.kw	Kuwait

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Commission on Environmental Economic and Social Policy (CEESP)	Mr. Mohammad Shahbaz CEESP Regional Vice Chair for West Asia bulqa1@gmail.com	Ms. Fidaa Haddad Project Manager/ Gender Focal Point fida.haddad@iucn.org
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