



INTERNATIONAL UNION
FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE

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2015 IUCN ROWA
ANNUAL REPORT

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Message from the Regional Director



IUCN's achievements are strengthened by its core; The Union.

At the Regional Office for West Asia we are proud to work closely with 66* members spanning over 13 countries.

Different environmental and political challenges in the area have further pushed us to prioritize and combine poverty and gender equity. Mainstreaming conservation efforts with the development agenda has become very crucial.

IUCN ROWA's mandate is to work supportively and in collaboration with our members and partners in the region that include NGOs and governments, to achieve a new paradigm for sustainable development based on the concept of people centered development.

We pride at our ability to catalyze policy. On a national and regional scale, IUCN ROWA experts are involved in a wide range of UN environmental policy events. IUCN ROWA also provides technical assistance to state members in West Asia; in 2015, IUCN ROWA has

assisted in creating the First Nation CBD report for Palestine.

It's also our role to share critical conservation knowledge which includes producing and disseminating over 40 different knowledge outputs in 2015. IUCN ROWA has successfully implemented the Regional Conservation Forum held in Jordan aiming at providing the governments, NGOs, partners and the private sector a platform to engage with each other; to discuss and debate key conservation issues as well as an opportunity to prepare for an effective programme planning and discuss membership business, to initiate discussions on regional participation in the next Congress (2016).

We thank the West Asia members and partners for their continued commitment towards achieving our mandate and vision: "Secure living in a just and healthy environment in West Asia", for our core responsibility as a union is to achieve positive change during the region's darkest times.

Fadi Shraideh, Regional Director



IUCN at a Glance

IUCN is a membership union uniquely composed of both government and civil society organisations. It provides public, private and non-governmental organisations with the knowledge and tools that enable human progress, economic development and nature conservation to take place together.

Created in 1948, IUCN has evolved into the world's largest and most diverse environmental network. It harnesses the experience, resources and reach of its 1,300 member organisations and the input of some 15,000 experts. IUCN is the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it. Our experts are organised into six commissions dedicated to species survival, environmental law, protected areas, social and economic policy, ecosystem management, and education and communication.

The ability to convene diverse stakeholders and provide the latest science, objective recommendations and on the ground expertise drives IUCN's mission of informing and empowering conservation efforts



worldwide. We provide a neutral forum in which governments, NGOs, scientists, businesses, local communities, indigenous peoples groups, faith-based organisations and others can work together to forge and implement solutions to environmental challenges.

By facilitating these solutions, IUCN provides governments and institutions at all levels with the impetus to achieve universal goals, including on biodiversity, climate change and sustainable development, which IUCN was instrumental in defining.

Combined, our knowledge base and diverse membership make IUCN an incubator and trusted repository of best practices, conservation tools, and international guidelines and standards. As the only environmental organisation with official United Nations Observer Status, IUCN ensures that nature conservation has a voice at the highest level of international governance.

IUCN's expertise and extensive network provide a solid foundation for a large and diverse portfolio of conservation projects around the world. Combining the latest science with the traditional knowledge of local communities, these projects work to reverse habitat loss, restore ecosystems and improve people's well-being. They also produce a wealth of data and information which feeds into IUCN's analytical capacity.

Through their affiliation with IUCN, member organisations are part of a democratic process, proposing and voting on resolutions which drive the global conservation agenda. They meet every four years at the IUCN World Conservation Congress to set priorities and agree on the Union's work programme. IUCN congresses have produced several key international environmental agreements including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the World Heritage Convention, and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. We continue to help these conventions strengthen and evolve so that they can respond to emerging challenges.

Our member organisations are represented by the IUCN Council – the governing body. Headquartered in Switzerland, IUCN Secretariat comprises 1,000 staff in 45 countries.



Strategic Orientation

The IUCN West Asian region comprises of 13 countries including Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen and Iran in addition to the Gulf countries including, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. West Asia is part of three eco-regions that incorporate a variety of ecosystems, including Mediterranean forests, deserts, plains, rangelands, savannas, oases, mountains, rivers, lakes, springs, mudflats, swamps, marshes, mangroves and coral reefs. All of which provide a wide array of ecosystem services and ecological corridors for migratory species through the region.

IUCN Regional Office for West Asia aims to be active in all 13 countries in various conservation and sustainable development activities that face our region today;

- Land degradation, aridity and desertification
- Unsustainable water extraction and use
- Biodiversity and habitat loss, and species extinction.
- Threats to sensitive marine ecosystems through pollution, habitat destruction, Invasive Alien Species, and unplanned coastal development.

Moreover, some of these countries face severe consequences of conflict and warfare along with its associated large-scale human suffering, destruction of infrastructure, and environmental degradation leading to a critical need of post-conflict environmental reconstruction.

IUCN ROWA's role is to coordinate activities within four major themes in the overall region; **Water & Climate Change, Protected Areas & Biodiversity, Drylands & Livelihoods, and finally Marine & Coastal Zone Management.** Other cross cutting issues that also include gender mainstreaming and natural resource management are also major issues IUCN ROWA works on. This comes as a challenge since environmental priorities are intimately associated with poverty, equity, security and conflict. Therefore, mainstreaming conservation efforts with the development agenda becomes very crucial. IUCN ROWA's mandate is to work supportively and in collaboration with our members and partners in the region that include NGOs and governments, to achieve a new paradigm for sustainable development based on the concept of people centered development.

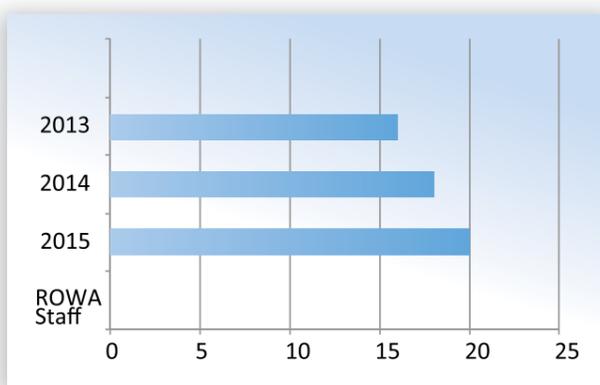
Its role is to share critical conservation knowledge with all members and partners and currently focus on providing services which brings added value to the ongoing activities, while also building awareness of the West Asia region and its special strengths. One of many IUCN ROWA strengths is its ability to catalyze policy.

On a national and regional scale, IUCN ROWA experts are involved in a wide range of UN environmental policy events and are continually requested by governments to help update national policies, strategies and action plans regarding UN conventions.

IUCN ROWA also takes pride in providing this technical assistance to state members in West Asia. Moreover, recognizing the important role that women can play in this regard, governments also request IUCN ROWA assistance in drafting gender sensitive Programs for mainstreaming gender in other topics like climate change in the region.

The work of IUCN ROWA can only be possible with the help of regional members which include governments and NGOs. In 2015, the number of members in the region increased from 44 to 57 with a great achievement of finally including 4 members from Palestine.

IUCN ROWA proudly runs professional units which include 4 different programmes, documentation and communication, membership, procurement, finance and more. The total number of staff at the regional office stands at 20 full time staff members in 2015.



Programme work & main achievements for 2015

Since its inception, IUCN's work has focused on finding pragmatic solutions to the world's most pressing environmental and development challenges. Through its Member organisations, the Union supports and participates in scientific research, promotes and helps implement national conservation legislation, policies and practices, and funds, operates or manages thousands of field projects worldwide.

All of IUCN's work is guided by a Global Programme, which is adopted by Member organisations every four years at the IUCN World Conservation Congress. The IUCN Programme 2013–2016 aims to mobilise communities working for biodiversity conservation, sustainable development and poverty reduction, and is based on three Programme Areas:

- Valuing and conserving nature.
- Effective and equitable governance of nature's use.
- Deploying nature-based solutions to global challenges in climate, food and development.

IUCN ROWA works closely with members to achieve results based on these programme areas through its core four implementing programmes;

- The Water & Climate Change Programme
- The Drylands, livelihoods and gender Programme
- The Marine and Coastal Management Programme
- The Protected Areas and Biodiversity Programme

Valuing and Conserving Nature

Biodiversity is important in its own right, and provides food security, human health, clean air and water, and contributes directly to local livelihoods and economic development.

Conserving biodiversity is central to the mission of IUCN, which is a leading provider of biodiversity knowledge, tools and standards used to influence policy, undertake conservation planning and guide action on the ground. IUCN ROWA continues to work with members and partners to achieve this global result through its regional programmes.

In 2015, IUCN ROWA through projects have assisted in assessing 2 new marine protected areas in Lebanon and drafted their management plans. This has helped the government of Lebanon establish a strategic and effective management plan that will improve species and habitat conservation which directly falls under the CBD strategic goals; the programme has therefore improved biodiversity and directly connected it to the Aishii Target 11.

Through ROWA's involvement in sustainable fisheries, working with partners and members have helped in enhancing the Tyre Coastal Nature Reserve in Lebanon's capacity to implement its own set action plan. In Jordan, activities have been performed to help mainstream biodiversity observation into coastal zone management efforts with the UNDP Jordan and members. Conserving species has been also a key priority with ROWA's involvement in supporting Manta Ray conservation efforts in Gaza, Palestine; were the procurement of satellite tags have been facilitated.



Taking part in analysing country gaps for national protected areas and species, ROWA has finally been able to produce a situation analysis for the region. This goes hand in hand with the creation of CBD reports for Jordan and Palestine and involving at least 30 partners in improving the effectiveness of biodiversity awareness and identifying biodiversity gaps in the region.

In an effort to create an integrated and systemic approach for ecosystems and water resource management; much has been done to develop and adopt methodologies at policy, decision-making and practitioner levels. ROWA has pushed water management and climate change resilience in 12 piloted areas in the region with an aim to increase awareness and trust on the systematic approach (know-how, methodologies and tools) for sustainable ecosystem and water resources planning and management. This can only be possible by developing a Learning Alliance platform and an Arab Network for Pastoralist Communities established among members and partners in the region for knowledge creation and sharing to influence policies. The participation of stakeholders, including women, in multi-stakeholders platforms and expression for their support in Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt and Morocco in water and climate change management has been the core of participatory engagement.

This year has been identified as an opportunity to bridge the policy – implementation gap in Jordan through the revival and support of the Hima system, for scaling up in the entire Arabian Peninsula. A comprehensive economic valuation study of a large-scale rangeland restoration scenario was established using high-resolution remote sensing and ArcSWAT (Soil and Water Assessment Tool) integrated with economic analysis of key regulating and provisioning ecosystem services provided by the HIMA systems.

Effective and equitable governance of nature's use

Sharing power, responsibility and benefits in natural resource management, and strengthening governance arrangements to make decisions more transparent, inclusive and equitable, are good for both people and biodiversity. IUCN works with its Members, Commissions, and partners to support the effective and equitable governance of nature's use at all relevant levels.



In 2015, much investment has been made in existing MPAs in Lebanon for persuading the public and corporate donors of its values through different outreach platforms. IUCN ROWA has also estimated the full costs of resource-use in order to make more efficient decisions concerning resource use and management, particularly for coral reefs with reference to both current and potential use and the socioeconomic significance. Much work has been done by proposing a list of incentive measures and financial schemes to be included within the local regulatory systems for improved governance of nature's use in Jordan and Lebanon.

Shared governance is key in many initiatives IUCN has taken, making sure that tools and knowledge for gender mainstreaming are available and used for ecosystem management. In 2015, all programs and

initiatives were committed to ensure this goal and an estimated 50% of targeted groups in the ROWA programme were women. This therefore supports the LAS and Regional Arab Women organization in addressing Gender into new SDGs and proposed indicators for SDG 15 and 6. Climate Change mitigation and adaptation policies, strategies and practices at national and regional levels have also included gender concerns. This included many watershed resilience strategies and local adaptation plans developed with a clear priority for supporting ecosystem management and biodiversity conservation in over 5 countries in the MENA region. Stakeholder technical and decision making capacities are also built on ways to improve governance of ecosystems through implementing pilot projects and resilience plans for future.



Deploying nature-based solutions to global challenges in climate, food and development

Tackling climate change, securing clean air and water, and ensuring sustainable food production is fundamental to the planet's future. Nature can contribute many of the solutions towards addressing these problems. These contributions range from carbon storage to clean drinking water supplies. They also secure enormous direct and indirect economic benefits and create local jobs. IUCN works with governments, the private sector and communities around the world to promote nature-based solutions, helping to restore lands, rivers, wetlands and oceans.

IUCN ROWA has developed food production systems based on wealth and diversity of ecosystems, improving food security indirectly through the sustainable use of natural resources. Positive impacts do take time to yield improved stocks of hunted and gathered wild stocks, however, in 2015 ROWA was able to succeed in doing so in Jordan and Lebanon by reducing illegal and unregulated fishing in Tyre, south Lebanon to its lowest points, allowing marine biodiversity to regenerate for improved support and fish stocks.

These efforts have gone hand in hand to completing the second phase of turtle tagging, within the area to better understand the relationship between turtles and fisheries, allowing for better management of closed areas and reduction of turtle mortality due to bycatch.

One of the major aspects of biodiversity conservation is the national mitigation of strategies to climate change and using a systemic approach in field projects focusing on enhancing social and ecological resilience in the face of climate change. Lessons learned from experiences of how stakeholders "include local communities" have adapted to climate change and extreme weather events were documented and shared across the region through a Regional knowledge sharing hub established covering 4 thematic areas in water based on a capacity needs assessment. ROWA through a participatory natural resource mapping method established a finer scale assessment to complement the use of technologies and harness indigenous knowledge. This methodology was used to identify how local pastoral communities in the region determined what areas are suitable for grazing, those areas with high and low grazing potential and key seasonal resource patches. In 2015, ROWA jointly with FAONE thereafter developed CI indicators for forest and rangeland management for the MENA region.

Strategic Partnerships

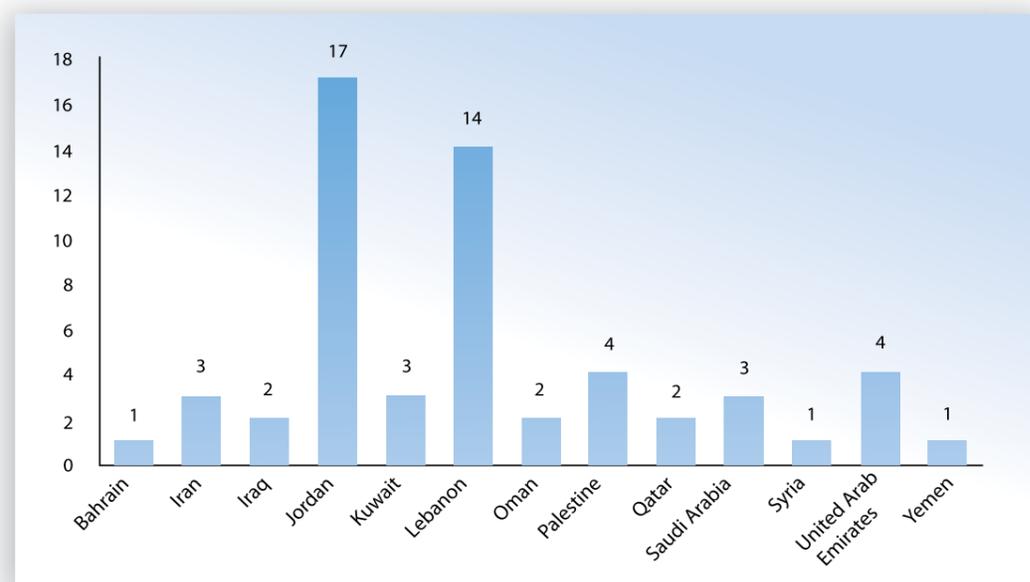
Donors & Partners:



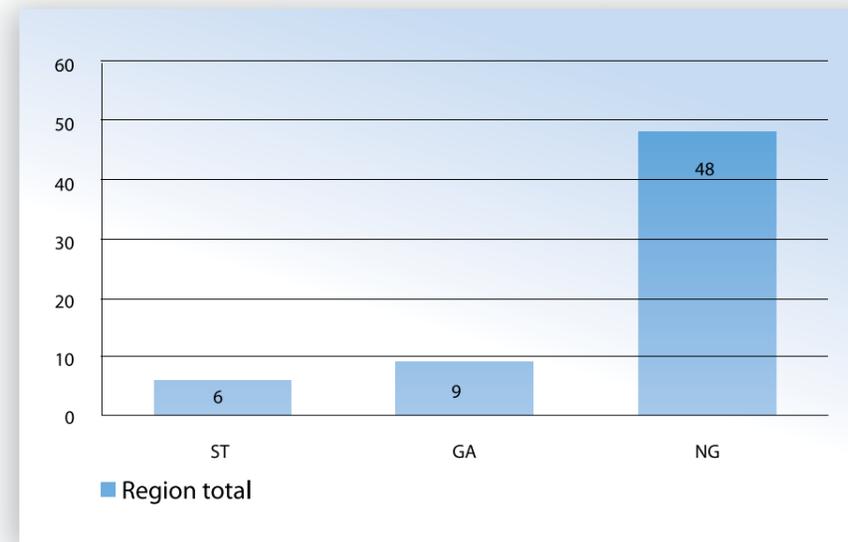
Members and Commissions

IUCN counts on the support of a large network of partners who help implement the IUCN Programme, or offer their knowledge and expertise to support the Union's work. This work is made possible through the generous contributions of a growing number of members.

Country/Category	State Member	Government Member	Non-Government	Total
Bahrain			1	1
Iran	1		2	3
Iraq	1	1		2
Jordan	1	2	14	17
Kuwait	1	1	1	3
Lebanon			14	14
Oman	1		1	2
Palestine			4	4
Qatar		1	1	2
Saudi Arabia	1	2		3
Syria			1	1
United Arab Emirates		2	2	4
Yemen			1	1
Region total	6	9	48	57



IUCN ROWA Member Categories



NEW IUCN ROWA MEMBERS IN 2015		
Persian Wildlife Heritage Foundation	PWHF	Iran
Marine Science Centre	MSC	Iraq
Sustainable Development of Agricultural Resources	SDAR	Jordan
Association for the Development of Rural Capacities	ADR	Lebanon
Operation Big Blue Association	OBBA	Lebanon
The Environmental Education Center of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land	ELCJHL	Palestine

IUCN ROWA COMMISSION MEMBERS	
Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM)	25
Commission on Education and Communication (CEC)	25
Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy	38
Species Survival Commission (SSC)	173
World Commission on Environmental Law	16
World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA)	53

IUCN ROWA REGIONAL & NATIONAL COMMITTEES	
West Asia Regional Committee	
Jordan National Committee	
Lebanon National Committee	
Kuwait National Committee	

IUCN ROWA MEMBER EVENTS IN 2015

Mediterranean Experience of Eco-Tourism – MEET Project, Final Conference	Barcelona – Spain	10 - 11 December, 2015
IUCN ROWA 8th Regional Conservation Forum	Amman – Jordan	10 - 13 November, 2015
Training on Payment of Ecosystem Services	Amman – Jordan	03 – 06 November, 2105
Eco-city World Summit 20015	Abu Dhabi – UAE	11 - 13 October, 2015
Eye on Earth Summit 2015	Abu Dhabi – UAE	05 - 09 October, 2015
The second “MEET Ecotourism product and cluster consolidation” workshop	Aqaba - Jordan	19 - 21 September, 2015
MAVA project, exchange visit	Lebanon	09-14 August, 2105
Decision maker on participatory range land management	Lebanon	3 – 7 August, 2015
Palestine Fifth National Report on Biodiversity workshop	Amman - Jordan	31 May – 2 June, 215
The Nature & Water Knowledge Sharing Forum	Sharm – Egypt	09 - 14 May, 2015
World Water Fourm in South Korea	South Korea	11 – 17 April, 2105
Ecotourism management Traning	Azraq - Jordan	15 - 16 March, 2015
Welcoming reception for IUCN DG	Amman - Jordan	03 March, 2015
Would water Forum	Jordan – dead sea	January, 2015
Arab World Marine Protected Areas Symposium	Hurghada – Egypt	18 – 22 January, 2105
Arab Water Week	Dead Sea - Jordan	14 - 15 January, 2015
Sustainable Fisheries Management for Improved Livelihoods of the Coastal Fishing Community in Tyre - Lebanon		

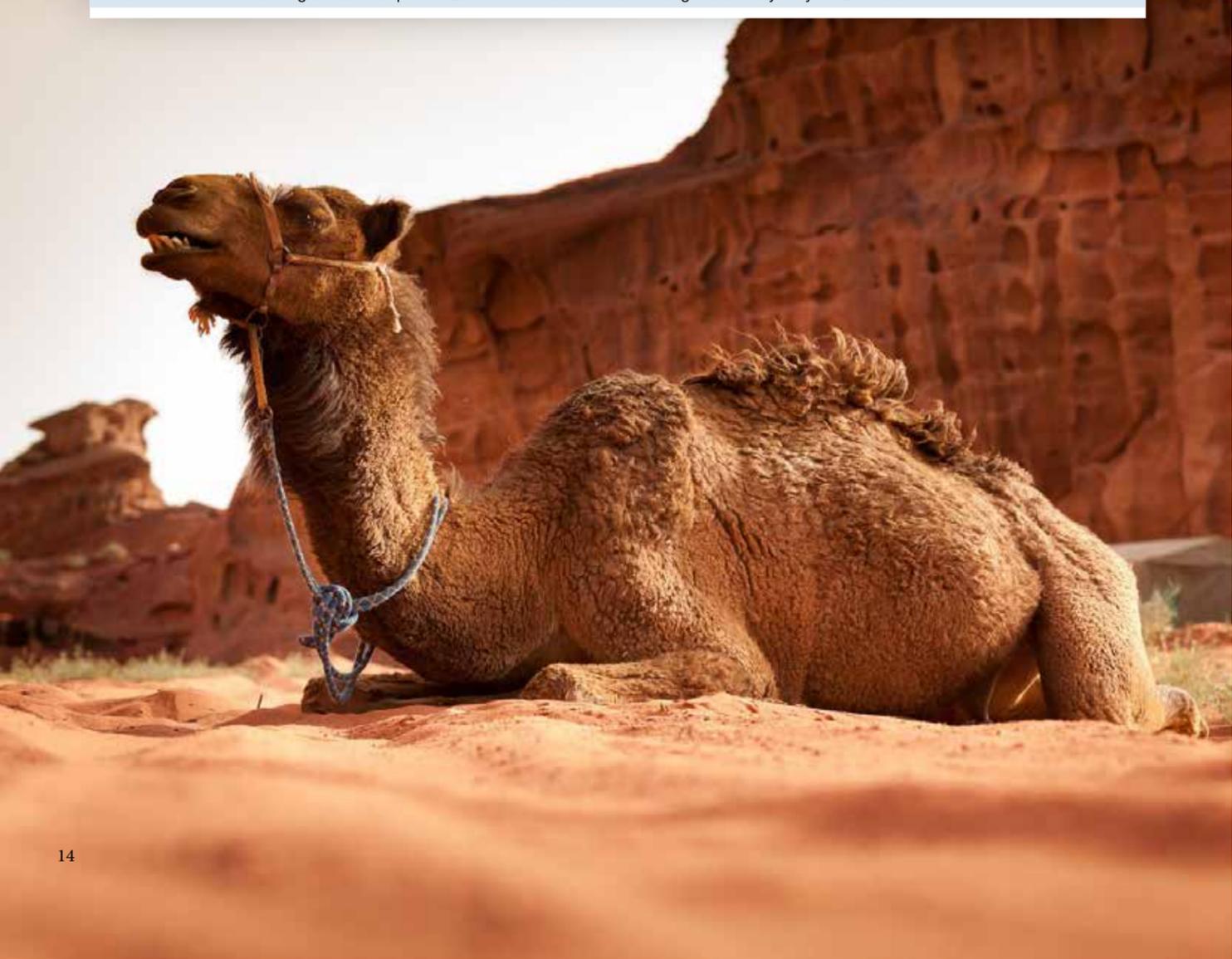
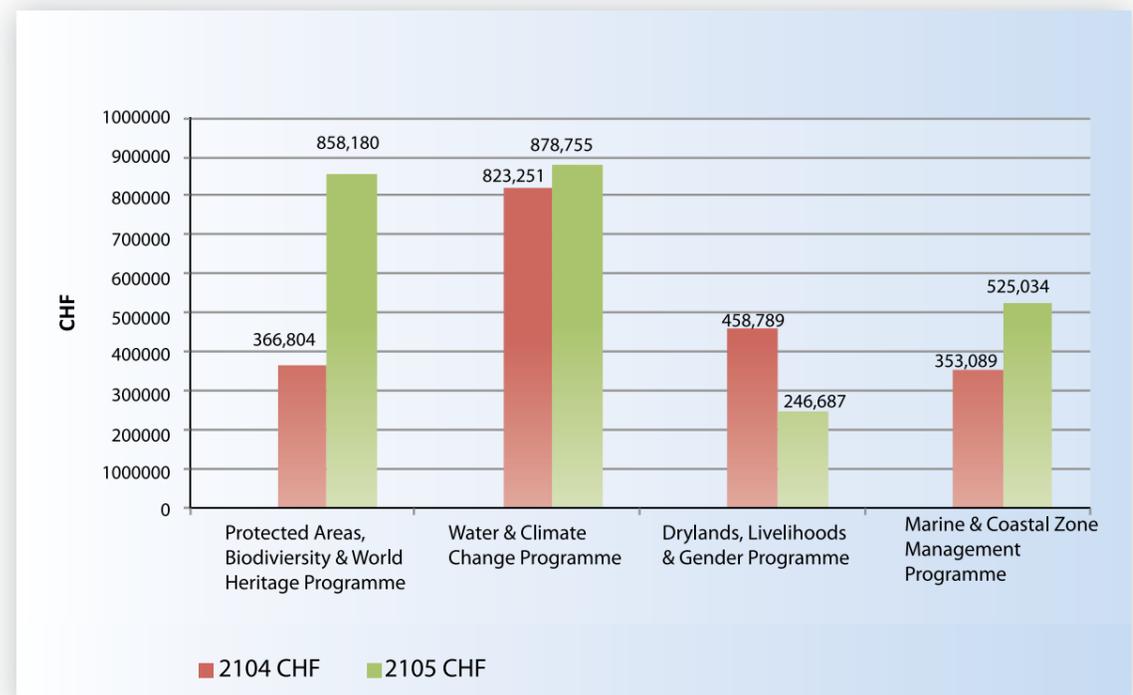
Regional financial summary

REGIONAL FINANCIAL SUMMARY

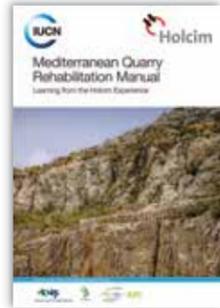
The 2015 financial statements were audited by financial services firm and therefore comply with IUCN's own statutes and accounting policies that are a suitable internal control framework system set in place.

ROWA Programme expenditures	2014 CHF	2015 CHF
Protected Areas, Biodiversity & World Heritage Programme	366,804	858,180
Water and Climate Change Programme	823,251	878,755
Drylands, Livelihoods and Gender Programme	458,789	246,687
Marine & Coastal Zone Management Programme	353,089	525,034

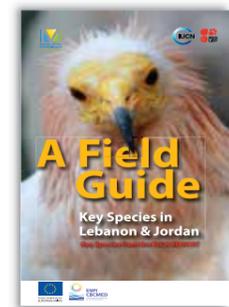
year	Protected Areas, Biodiversity & World Heritage Programme	Water and Climate Change Programme	Drylands, Livelihoods and Gender Programme	Marine & Coastal Zone Management Programme
2014	366804	823251	458789	353089
2015	858180	878755	246687	525034



Key Publications & other outputs



Mediterranean quarry rehabilitation manual



A field guide : key species in Lebanon & Jordan



Sustainable Fisheries Management



A Toolkit for Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Jordan



An economic valuation of a large - scale rangeland restoration project through the Hima system in Jordan
An economic valuation of sustainable land management through agroforestry in eastern Sudan
Costs And Benefits Of Communal Rangeland :Rehabilitation In Jordan



Effective community participation: Leading to better rangeland biodiversity conservation today



Sustainably Investing in Rangelands: Jordan

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