


Protected Areas Project (LEB/95/G31)

Project Name	Strengthening of National Capacity and Grassroots In-Situ Conservation for Sustainable Biodiversity Protection / Protected Areas Project – Lebanon (LEB/95/G31)
LOGO	
Budget	2,500,000 \$
Executing Agency	Government of Lebanon Ministry of Environment / MoE
Implementing Partners	MOE/ Ministry of Environment GEF-UNDP / Global Environment Facility – United Nations Development Programme IUCN/ the World Conservation Union Nature Reserves Committees NGOs /Non Government Organization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ACS/ Al-Shouf Cedar Society - FOHE/ Friends of Horsh Ehden - EPC/ Environment Protection Committee - GL/ Green Line - SPNL & EIC/ Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon & Environment Information Center - NCSR/ National Council for Scientific Research - FON/ Friends of Nature
Funders	Global Environment Facility – GEF
Start Date	15/11/1996
Duration	5 YEARS
Extensions	3 YEARS Till 15/11/2004
Project Manager	-----
Project Focal Point (Department)	Eng. Mrs Lina Yamout Acting Chief of Protection of Urban Environment Service/MOE
Aim	The project will put into place an effectively managed system of protected areas to safeguard endemic and endangered species of flora and fauna, conserve their habitats and incorporate biodiversity conservation as an integral part of sustainable human development. The project will test a specific model of three demonstration parks where the Ministry of Environment, local NGOs and in-country scientific institutions will cooperate and coordinate their activities to promote both the long-term ecological and the short-term economic objectives of wildlife conservation. It will also

	<p>incorporate educational and sensitization components directed towards the local communities, and will reach out to the public and decision makers with documentary films and TV spots, thus aiming to promote national reconciliation by bringing people and institutions together for the conservation of nature.</p>
Objectives	<p>The overall development objective is to conserve endemic and endangered wildlife and their habitats, incorporate wildlife conservation as an integral part of sustainable human development, strengthen the institutional capacity of government agencies and non governmental institutions, and promote national reconciliation.</p> <p>1. Management and Conservation of three Protected Areas.</p> <p>Three functional protected areas (Al Shouf Cedars, Horsh Ehdén and Palm Islands Nature Reserves) managed by local park management teams according to management plans prepared with the assistance of international conservation organizations and in-country scientific institutions and organizations that will conduct field studies, gather basic ecological data, analyze and publish results, and monitor the progress of the protected area. Based on scientific assessments an overall strategy of conservation will be defined, and plans prepared for the future sustainability of the project beyond the present intervention.</p> <p>2. Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening</p> <p>An enhanced capability of government agencies, scientific institutions and non-governmental organizations to oversee study and manage protected areas in an effective and sustainable manner by means of institutional support for the Ministry of Environment and training workshop for all project participants to upgrade their skills.</p> <p>3. Sensitization and Education Campaign</p> <p>A sensitization and education campaign targeting a number of population groups within the vicinity of the protected areas as well as at the national level, in order to assure large-scale sustainability of biodiversity conservation efforts. This will include outreach to the local communities living in the vicinity of protected areas, preparation of educational materials for use in local schools as well as recommendations for national-level environmental education components, and an effective series of documentaries and TV spots to sensitize the public and to supply the visual materials for an awareness campaign to alert government officials to the need for biodiversity conservation and establishment of a protected areas network.</p>

Achievements:

1. The Project as a model for the management of protected areas:

the Protected Areas Project have created a working relationship between Government and Non-Governmental Organizations in the field of protected areas management where cooperation and decentralization of operations is the basis of that relationship.

2. The Project as a source of trained protected areas personnel (Capacity Building):

The strengthening of national capacities has been clearly evidenced in the active involvement of the Ministry of Environment in the management of the Project and the marked progress of the contracted NGOs in the implementation of its activities, in order to oversee, manage, study and monitor protected areas. The impact of all capacity building activities is being reflected in the daily management of the reserves.

3. Finalisation of the Training Manual:

The Training Manual, prepared by Dr. John Marsh (IUCN Consultant) for the Protected Areas in Lebanon, has been finalized. The project in the process of distributing the Manual to all concerned.

4. Strengthened involvement of the Ministry of Environment:

The Ministry has taken the lead in the implementation of the project since the year 2000.

5. The Project as an effective tool for In-Situ Conservation of Biodiversity:

The project has contributed significantly to in-situ conservation as seen in the observed and documented increase of the flora and fauna in the three nature reserves of Al Shouf Cedars, Horsh Ehden and Palm Islands during the past years, such as the evident increase in the vegetative cover in all the reserves and the breeding populations of wolf, boar, partridge, squirrels, and marine turtles. That has demonstrated the effectiveness of in-situ conservation of biodiversity, and is expected to have a significance impact at both the national and regional levels.

6. The Project as a stimulus for new protected areas in Lebanon:

The impact of the Project in establishing new protected areas is already evident in the legal proclamation of four new protected areas by the Lebanese Parliament in 1998 and 1999, in addition to the three existing reserves of Shouf, Ehden and Palm Islands.

7. The Project as a promoter of management plans:

The three management plans for: Al-Shouf Cedars, Horsh Ehden and Palm Islands Nature Reserves plans have been completed, finalized and signed by the Minister of Environment and the Director General and are now the master authorized plans for the protection and management of the three nature reserves for the five years period 2000-2005 and will remain in force until replaced by another authorized plans. They are particularly important to the performance of the professional staff managing the three reserves. Also these plans are under the process of being translated into Arabic and will be distributed to all concerned upon the finalization of their translation.

8. Finalisation of Funding Strategy and Business Plans for the three protected Areas:

-To support resource mobilization, A Funding Strategy has been prepared by Trevor Sandwith (IUCN Consultant) for the protected areas in Lebanon along with Business Plans for each of the AL-Shouf Cedars, Horsh Ehden and Palm Islands Nature Reserves for the purpose of supporting the NGO's in the mobilization of financial resources.

-A private firm (Conseil & Developpement) has been selected, through a bidding process, to implement the fund-raising activities and to upgrade the Funding Strategy and the three Business Plans of the three Reserves. These plans are completed and under implementation.

9. The Project as the catalyst for financial donations, and a support to resource mobilization:

The Project introduced:

1- "Management Plans" to improve the level of management of the three protected areas.

2- "Plans and Guidelines" to upgrade visitor entrances and facilities in all three protected areas.

3- "Business Plans" to guide the financial management and forecasting of the three protected areas.

4- "Fund-Raising Strategies" to guide the management of the three protected areas on how to effectively raise funds.

The potential impact of these specific publications is to encourage financial donations by impressing potential donors with the management principles and development plans for each of the nature reserves. This will move the issue of sustainability of protected areas forward by allowing the individual reserves to raise more money to pay their staff, purchase and replace equipment, and continue gathering scientific data for research and monitoring.

10. Implementation of Scientific Studies for the Nature Reserves:

- The National Council for Scientific Research has completed its flora and fauna surveys for five sites, the AL-Shouf Cedars, Horsh Ehden and Palm Islands Nature Reserves in addition to the Tyre Coast Nature Reserve and the Ammiq Wetland, based on a comprehensive review of published literature and on numerous visits to the AL-Shouf Cedars, Horsh Ehden, Palm Islands, Tyre Coast Nature Reserves and Ammiq Wetlands. The NCSR has been also coordinating with the Green Line NGO for the identification of indicators for the monitoring program.

- The project has contracted the Lebanese University to conduct "Biodiversity assessment and monitoring in the 3 Nature Reserves in addition to Tyre Coast Nature Reserve and Ammiq marches" as a second phase of the field studies that was conducted by the NCSR. These studies has commissioned and are an undergoing process.

11. The Green Line GIS Monitoring Program:

One of the major outputs of this project is the capacity building of the Green line NGO in the field of GIS monitoring. Green Line was contracted for the preparation of Monitoring Programmes of the Fauna and the Flora in the three Reserves that has to be conducted by the Management teams of the Reserves. Also the Project has

procured and delivered to Green Line the High Resolution Satellite Imageries in order to provide the project with accurate and up-to-date information on the reserves.

12. The Project as a vehicle for promoting national reconciliation:

National reconciliation is a real component of the Protected Areas Project. Its impact can be estimated by measuring the progress of the following Project initiated activities:

- 1- the number of Lebanese visiting the three nature reserves
- 2- the number of Government, NGO and Scientific Institutions working together for the conservation of nature in the reserves
- 3- the number of issues and solutions relating to nature reserves that required interaction at Government, Municipal, NGO and private levels.
- 4- the number of meetings of all the implementing partners were marked with high interaction among the different partners. As well as the Reserves Managers meetings that were held at the Ministry of Environment to review the overall progress of work and challenges met at the level of each reserve. These meetings have proven to be an instrumental networking tool as well as a problem-solving forum for the management teams.

13. Transfer of the local management of protected areas to the “Government Appointed Committees” (GAC):

MoE has transferred the local management of protected areas to the GACs that are usually established by Ministerial Decisions. GACs adopt a participatory approach where local actors are represented and actively involved in its activities. Through the GACs, NGOs, municipalities, consultants, and government institutions are working together for the management of Protected Areas at every site. GACs are fully responsible for the overall management of the sites, including planning, financial operations, resource mobilization, and supervision. Relevant terms of reference and job descriptions have been prepared. Training on reserve management, planning and financial operations was conducted to all GACs.

14. Educational materials prepared by the Friends of Nature (FON):

The FON was contracted to prepare, complete and produce all deliverables relating to the educational materials, guidebooks, slides, mobile exhibits and teachers training courses, that has been a successful completion.

15. Production of an educational Video for Nature Reserves in Lebanon by the Society for Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL):

The Project has contracted SPNL for the preparation and production of an educational video that was disseminated and well received and has won the praise of many viewers who are regularly requesting copies. Also the Project has produced and broadcasted a 30 seconds TV Spot about Protected Areas

16. The Project has conducted a Sensitization and Awareness Campaign with the Environment Information Center (SPNL / EIC):

The Project signed a contract for Sensitization and Awareness Campaign component with the Society for Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL) and the Environment Information Center (EIC) in order to focus on the importance of the protected areas for the conservation of biodiversity with particular reference to Al-Shouf Cedars, Horsh Ehden, Palm Islands Nature Reserves and Tyre Coast Nature Reserve. On-going awareness activities are being undertaken, where MoE's Project staff and NGOs staff are continuously presenting lectures on Protected Areas in clubs, schools, municipalities, etc

17. Declaration of 10 March as a National Day for Nature Reserves:

The declaration of 10 March as a National Day for Nature Reserves has triggered further public awareness activities (Radio Contest, Newspaper articles, TV interviews, Digital billboards, TV Spots, Questionnaires, Electronic message, Press conference given by the Minister of Environment, and additional activities were undertaken by GACs on the local basis).

All material produced within the Project, were used in exhibitions and awareness activities conducted by MoE, such as the World Environment Day and during the National Day for Protected Areas (10 March).

18. Preparation of a Framework Law for Protected Areas:

The Ministry of Environment has prepared a Framework Law for Protected Areas that defines their importance, their management, and their sustainability. MOE is still reviewing the framework law for Protected Areas after receiving new comments from concerned parties.

In addition to the fact that the new law of the MoE, that addresses its new organizational structure and that was approved by the Council of Ministers and submitted to the Parliament for approval, foresees the creation of a Service for the Management of Natural Resources that includes a Department for Biological Diversity and Protected Areas.

Publications:

- 1- "Management Plans" for each of the AL-Shouf Cedars, Horsh Ehden and Palm Islands Nature Reserves - PAP
- 2- "Plans and Guidelines" for each of the AL-Shouf Cedars, Horsh Ehden and Palm Islands Nature Reserves - PAP
- 3- "Business Plans" for each of the AL-Shouf Cedars, Horsh Ehden and Palm Islands Nature Reserves prepared by the American University of Beirut / PAP, reviewed and updated by Conseil & Developpement / PAP.
- 4- "A Funding Strategy for the protected areas in Lebanon" by Trevor Sandwith (IUCN Consultant)/ PAP, reviewed and updated by Conseil & Developpement / PAP.
- 5- "Scientific Studies for the Nature Reserves" National Council for Scientific Research / PAP.
- 6- "Monitoring Programmes of the Fauna and the Flora in the three Reserves" Green Line Association /PAP.
- 7- "Training Manual" by Dr. John Marsh (IUCN Consultant) for the Protected Areas in Lebanon - PAP
- 8- Posters for Marine Turtles – EIC / PAP
- 9- Poster for National Day for Protected Areas – MOE / PAP
- 10- Poster for the Protected Areas Project - PAP
- 11- An educational Video for Nature Reserves in Lebanon by the Society for Protection of Nature in Lebanon / PAP.
- 12- Brochure on the Nature Reserves EIC/PAP.
- 13- "دليل حارس الغابة" EIC/PAP
- 14- Educational materials, guidebooks, slides... by the Friends of Nature (FON)/ PAP