

BIODIVERSITY

CLIMATE CHANGE

DESERTIFICATION

Institutional Consolidation of the Palestinian Environmental Authority



➤ CAPACITY BUILDING

➤ LEGAL FRAMEWORK



Background and rationale

Economic and social development is a priority for the Palestinian people who live in the West Bank and in Gaza strip, and who cope constantly, among other problems, with poverty, scarcity of natural resources and all kind of environmental problems related to high population densities.



At the same time, it is acknowledged that the appropriate management of environmental resources is the first step towards sustainable development and that both must be informed by adequate regulation and a relevant legal framework to be properly implemented. Therefore, a sound environmental legislation is necessary to enforce the sustainable use of natural resources. Within the framework of the Middle East Peace Process, the Multilateral Working Group on Environment identified priorities for development and environmental conservation in the Palestinian Territories. In particular, the Italian and the Palestinian sides agreed to collaborate for the strengthening of capacities of the Palestinian

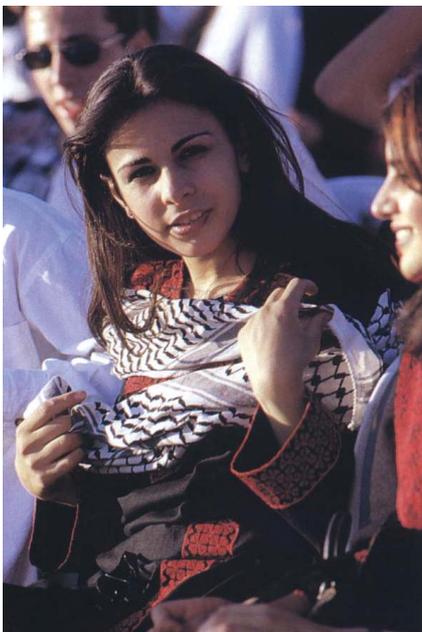


National Authority in the environmental sector, by focusing on the development of the legislation informing the use and management of natural resources. The process of legislation elaboration requires that a mechanism be put in place for coordination and consultation across government institutions as well as with relevant experts, stakeholders and the private sector. Given the fragmented nature of the Palestinian Territories, much of its natural resources are shared with neighbouring countries. Thus the preparation and enforcement of legislation also needs to be coordinated with adjacent States. In 2000 the Palestinian National Authority created the Ministry for Environmental Affairs, now called the Palestinian Environmental Authority. The latter has a highly flexible and decentralised management system as well as a strong inter-jurisdictional cooperation approach. Its stated policy is to actively involve other ministries, institutions, non governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector in the decision-making process.





An overall environmental strategy in the form of a ten-year prioritised plan has been prepared. Within this framework, targets have been identified and a rolling three-year action plan has been elaborated. Further, various issue-specific strategies and action plans have been defined, including a Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, established by Environmental Authority with UNDP/GEF support. The present Project will enhance the legislative capacity of the Authority through training, the establishment of a centre for environmental studies and the development of processes for preparing and implementing relevant legislation. Funds are provided by the Italian Cooperation through the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Core Fund. Execution and implementation are also entrusted to IUCN. The Project will build upon the outcomes of previous Italian and



Palestinian environmental cooperation on institutional consolidation and on the experience gained in the fields of legislation elaboration, waste management, water supply and sanitation. In particular, a Decision Support System (DSS) has been jointly established for the systemic planning of waste management, which is currently used by Environmental Authority in carrying out its institutional mandate. Among current DSS applications, the Italian Cooperation is financing the design and implementation of the Integrated Systemic Plan for Solid Waste Management in Anabta and surrounding villages, in collaboration with the World Bank.

Goal, objectives and expected outputs

The development goal of the Project is to contribute to the stabilisation of the region by supporting the consolidation of the national institutional and administrative capacities functional to the preservation of the regional environmental resources and to its related socio-economic development.

The specific objectives are as follows.

- ➊ Consolidate the Palestinian Environmental Authority by enhancing its capacity to evaluate legal environmental issues.
- ➋ Develop a regulatory system for the development of legislation.
- ➌ Develop procedures for the implementation of environmental policies.
- ➍ Develop training, education and public awareness activities.



- ➎ Establish a system of cooperation with relevant national and international bodies on the development of national environmental programmes.

Expected outputs are the following.

- ➏ A Centre for Environmental Studies established and running effectively.
- ➐ A legal and institutional framework for environmental planning in place.
- ➑ Guidelines for the overall regulatory system for the development of legislation and draft by-laws on Solid Waste, Wastewater and Protected Areas prepared.
- ➒ Procedures for the implementation of environmental policies developed.
- ➓ Capacity of the Environmental Authority staff raised through Project training initiatives and on-the-job technical assistance.





- An analysis carried out on the potential involvement of the private sector in the planning, negotiation and implementation of environmental policy.
- A National Plan on the Sustainable Management of Protected Areas developed.

Implementation and results

Implementation will begin in January 2003. The 18-month Project will enhance the capacity of MENA to evaluate legal environmental issues by establishing a Centre for Environmental Studies. Staff will receive training and the Centre will be equipped with software and publications and

linked to national and international databanks. An international scientific committee will be established to advise the Centre on its activities.

International and national lawyers will prepare a report on the legal and institutional framework for environmental planning within the Palestinian National Authority. This report will help guide legal processes within the Environmental Authority and its coordination with national bodies.

The guidelines for the overall regulatory system informing the elaboration of legislation will be developed through consultation with relevant institutions and the analysis of experience gained during the formulation of existing draft environmental legislation. Draft by-laws will be prepared on Solid Waste, Wastewater and Protected Areas through consultation with relevant institutions and experts. The procedures for the implementation of environmental policies will be developed against the standards established at the international level by the European Union and the United Nations. This will involve the review of existing procedures as well as national and international consultation.



Individual reports will define:

- a system of incentives and disincentives through which the implementation of environmental strategies will be promoted;
- administrative and control procedures for the implementation of environmental policies;
- criteria, standards and conditions for the involvement of the relevant national and international scientific and technical institutions.

Training initiatives will be planned and organised according to the needs identified during the implementation of the Project. Detailed policies and strategies for selected areas will also be developed. The first such initiative will be the preparation of a National Plan on the Sustainable Management of Protected Areas. Within this Plan, particular attention will be paid to trans-boundary ecosystem management and to promote coordination and synergies.

