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The World Bank

Report No: ICR00001337

IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETION AND RESULTS REPORT
(TF-90462)

ON A

GRANT FROM THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY TRUST FUND

IN THE AMOUNT OF US\$ 6.15 MILLION

TO THE

HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

FOR A

INTEGRATED ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT IN THE JORDAN RIFT VALLEY GEF PROJECT

January, 2014

Sustainable Development Department
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Middle East North Africa Region

CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS
(Exchange Rate Effective December 2, 2013)
Currency Unit = Jordan Dinars
1.00 JOD = US\$ 1.41
US\$ 1.00 = 0.708 JOD
FISCAL YEAR 2014

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ASEZA	Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority
CAS	Country Assistance Strategy
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species
CPS	Country Partnership Strategy
DZC	Development Zones Commission
EC	European Commission
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ESA	Environmental and Social Assessment
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
FY	Fiscal Year
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEO	Global Environment Objective
GOJ	Government of Jordan
ICR	Implementation Completion and Results Report
IEM	Integrate Ecosystem Management
IP	Implementation Performance
ISR	Implementation Status and Results Report
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
JRV	Jordan Rift Valley
JVA	Jordan Valley Authority
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MNA	Middle East North Africa
MOE	Ministry of Environment
MOMA	Ministry of Municipal Affairs
MOPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
MOTA	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
MTR	Mid Term Review
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NES	National Environment Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PA	Protected Area
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PAMETT	Protected Area Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
PDO	Project Development Objective
PDTRA	Petra Development and Tourism Regional Authority
PMU	Project Management Unit
QALP	Quality Assessment of Lending Portfolio
RSCN	Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature
SCA	Special Conservation Area
TTL	Task Team Leader
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

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Country Director:	Ferid Belhaj
Sector Manager:	Charles Cormier
Project Team Leader:	Tracy Hart
ICR Team Leader:	Helena Naber

HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN
Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Jordan Rift Valley

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HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN
Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Jordan Rift Valley

DATA SHEET

A. Basic Information			
Country:	Jordan	Project Name:	Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Jordan Rift Valley GEF
Project ID:	P075534	L/C/TF Number(s):	TF-90462
ICR Date:	12/31/2013	ICR Type:	Core ICR
Lending Instrument:	SIL	Borrower:	THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN
Original Total Commitment:	USD 6.15M	Disbursed Amount:	USD 6.15M
Revised Amount:	USD 6.15M		
Environmental Category: B		Global Focal Area: B	
Implementing Agencies: Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN)			
Cofinanciers and Other External Partners:			

B. Key Dates				
Process	Date	Process	Original Date	Revised / Actual Date(s)
Concept Review:	04/08/2004	Effectiveness:	09/19/2007	09/19/2007
Appraisal:	11/07/2006	Restructuring(s):		
Approval:	06/12/2007	Mid-term Review:	07/15/2010	
		Closing:	07/14/2013	07/14/2013

C. Ratings Summary	
C.1 Performance Rating by ICR	
Outcomes:	Moderately Satisfactory
Risk to Development Outcome	Moderate
Bank Performance:	Moderately Satisfactory
Borrower Performance:	Moderately Satisfactory

C.2 Detailed Ratings of Bank and Borrower Performance			
Bank	Ratings	Borrower	Ratings
Quality at Entry:	Moderately Satisfactory	Government:	Moderately Satisfactory
Quality of Supervision:	Moderately Satisfactory	Implementing Agency/Agencies:	Moderately Satisfactory
Overall Bank Performance:	Moderately Satisfactory	Overall Borrower Performance:	Moderately Satisfactory

C.3 Quality at Entry and Implementation Performance Indicators			
Implementation Performance	Indicators	QAG Assessments (if any)	Rating
Potential Problem Project at any time (Yes/No):	Yes	Quality at Entry (QEA):	QALP-2 (Design): Moderately Satisfactory
Problem Project at any time (Yes/No):	Yes	Quality of Supervision (QSA):	QALP-2 (Quality of Bank Supervision): Moderately Unsatisfactory
GEO rating before Closing/Inactive status	Satisfactory		

D. Sector and Theme Codes		
	Original	Actual
Sector Code (as % of total Bank financing)		
Central government administration	41	41
General agriculture, fishing and forestry sector	33	33
Other industry	13	13
Other social services	13	13

Theme Code (as % of total Bank financing)		
Biodiversity	29	29
Climate change	14	14
Environmental policies and institutions	29	29
Participation and civic engagement	14	14
Rural non-farm income generation	14	14

E. Bank Staff		
Positions	At ICR	At Approval
Vice President:	Inger Andersen	Daniela Gressani
Country Director:	Ferid Belhaj	Joseph P. Saba
Sector Manager:	Charles Cormier	Narasimham Vijay Jagannathan
Project Team Leader:	Tracy Hart	Kanta K. Rigaud
ICR Team Leader:	Helena Naber	
ICR Primary Author:	Melanie Argimon	

F. Results Framework Analysis

Project Development Objectives (PDO)

Assist the Recipient in (i) implementing generally accepted principles of integrated ecosystem management pertaining to land use in the Jordan Rift Valley; and (ii) establishing a network of integrated ecosystem management for protected areas and special conservation areas in the Jordan Rift Valley.

Global Environment Objectives (GEO)

To secure the ecological integrity of the Jordan Rift Valley as a globally important corridor.

Revised Global Environment Objectives (as approved by original approving authority) and Key Indicators and reasons/justifications

Not applicable

(a) GEO/ PDO Indicator(s)

Indicator	Baseline Value	Original Target Values (from approval documents)	Formally Revised Target Values	Actual Value Achieved at Completion or Target Years
GEO Indicator :	Coverage of key vegetation types increased in each Protected Area (PA).			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	None	100%		75%
Date achieved	09/19/2007	07/14/2013		07/14/2013
Comments (incl. % achievement)	The percent (%) achieved is based on the increase of vegetation cover in the PAs. For more details please see Annex 5.			

PDO Indicator :	Number of hectares in which users have more environmentally benign land use practices in accordance with land use guidelines and management plans.			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	Baseline will be established at the beginning of project implementation	100%		142%
Date achieved	09/19/2007	07/14/2013		07/14/2013
Comments (incl. % achievement)	The percent (%) achieved is based on the original target to establish 7 Special Conservation Areas (SCAs). With the establishment of 10 SCAs (estimated at an area of 13,050 ha the actual value achieved is estimated to exceed target values.			

(b) Intermediate Outcome Indicator(s)

Indicator	Baseline Value	Original Target Values (from approval documents)	Formally Revised Target Values	Actual Value Achieved at Completion or Target Years
Indicator 1 :	Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) publishes updated land use planning maps that define PA and Special Conservation Areas (SCAs) boundaries determined in consultation with communities.			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	Exact boundaries of PAs and SCAs are not defined on land-use maps.	100% Completed by year 4.		100%
Date achieved	09/19/2007	09/19/2011		07/14/2013
Comments (incl. % achievement)	Land use planning maps with defined PA and SCA boundaries were updated and published by the JVA twice, once at the Mid-term Review (MTR) and once at Project completion.			
Indicator 2 :	Land use guidelines for the Jordan Rift Valley prepared			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	0 Land use guidelines	100% Completed by year 4.		100%
Date achieved	09/19/2007	09/19/2011		07/14/2013
Comments (incl. % achievement)	Land-use guidelines were prepared			

Indicator 3	Protected area policy developed through a consultative process			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	No protected area policy	100% developed and approved by Cabinet		100%
Date achieved	09/19/2007	09/19/2011		07/14/2013
Comments (incl. % achievement)	Management plans were prepared for all PAs, including for the three designated PAs and for the proposed Shoubak PA			
Indicator 4	4 PAs and 7 SCAs legally established.			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	0 PAs and 0 SCAs	4 PAs and 7 SCAs legally established		3 PAs and 10 SCAs legally established
Date achieved	09/19/2007	09/19/2013		07/14/2013
Comments (incl. % achievement)	3 PAs (Yarmouk, Fifa and Qatar) (75% completed) and 10 SCAs (Al Shuleh, Khayyouf, Swaimah Park/Homret Maen, Rahmah, Ma'awa, Birket Al-Arayes, Wadi Bin Hammad, Aqaba Bird Observatory, Tal Al Arbaeen, Ziglab) (142%) were established. Rahmah's was designated as a PA, but was planned and is managed by the RSCN as an SCA.			
Indicator 5	Management Plans published for all PAs and Community Action Plans for 4 SCAs			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	0	4 PAs and 7 SCAs by year 4		100%
Date achieved	09/19/2007	09/19/2011		07/14/2013
Comments (incl. % achievement)	Management plans published for PAs and community action plans for 8 SCAs.			
Indicator 6	PAs staff recruited and management plans operational			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	0	100% Completed by year 6		75%
Date achieved	09/19/2007	09/19/2013		07/14/2013
Comments (incl. % achievement)	All PA staff has been recruited and management plans are operational in the 3 designated PAs.			
Indicator 7	Alternative livelihood options and nature based enterprises adopted by communities in SCAs			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	0 enterprises	100% Completed by year 6		100% Completed
Date achieved	09/19/2007	09/19/2013		07/14/2013
Comments (incl. % achievement)	Alternative livelihood options (incl. soap, mushrooms, and aquaculture) and nature based enterprises (incl. ecotourism) adopted by local communities in SCAs			
Indicator 8 :	Findings from assessment reports incorporated into management plans and zoning of PAs and community-driven conservation plans of SCAs.			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	0 assessments of climate change impacts.	By year 5 assessments incorporated.		100%
Date achieved	09/19/2007	09/19/2012		07/14/2013
Comments (incl. % achievement)	Assessment reports completed and findings incorporated into management plans and zoning of PAs and conservation plans for SCAs. Work will be continued by collaboration between RSCN Climate Change and Land Use units, and a National Climate Change Platform has been created.			

Indicator 9	Dissemination of information on assessments to areas outside			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	0 dissemination	100% completed by year 5		100%
Date achieved		09/19/2012		07/14/2013
Comments (incl. % achievement)	A knowledge management component was created and a number of knowledge products prepared. The Climate change documentation is integrated.			
Indicator 10 :	RSCN raises its endowment by US\$ 2million.			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	\$ 8.5 million in end of 2005 taken as the baseline.	Endowment increased by \$2 million (to \$10.5 million) by year 6.		Endowment increased by \$2million (to \$10.5 million) by year 6.
Date achieved	09/19/2007	09/19/2013		07/14/2013
Comments (incl. % achievement)	\$2 million were secured from USAID for the RSCN endowment fund as well as commitment to provide an additional \$0.5 million annually to the fund. A medium term fundraising strategy for the RSCN was also developed.			
Indicator 11	Private sector engagement increased by 20% against base year 2006			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	Limited private financing	20% increase		20% increase achieved
Date achieved	09/19/2007	09/19/2013		07/14/2013
Comments (incl. % achievement)	The baseline value for base year 2006 for this indicator is not clear. However considering a number of private sector engagement initiative were undertaken throughout the project (e.g. Memorandum of Agreement with Movenpick hotel in Aqaba; engagement with Dead Sea Company; installation of an RSCN nature shop in Queen Alia airport; initiation of cooperatives initiatives (soap, mushrooms, local handicrafts), and three nature camp sites out for concessions by the private sector) we judge the target value has been attained.			
Indicator 12	RSCN prepared business plans for each protected area			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	0 business plans	3 business plans		2 business plans and 4 ecotourism development strategies
Date achieved	09/19/2007	09/19/2013		07/14/2013
Comments (incl. % achievement)	2 business plans (66%) (Yarmouk PA and Wadi Bin Hammad SCA) and 4 ecotourism development strategies (Yarmouk PA, Shoubak PA, Homret Maeen SCA and Hima Al-Layathneh SCA), capitalizing on sites that can develop ecotourism. They have all been prepared through stakeholder consultation and are being implemented.			
Indicator 13	M&E system established and used (including to generate progress reports)			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	0 M&E Plan	100% M&E Plan applied the first year		M&E system in place from year 1
Date achieved	09/19/2007	09/19/2013		07/14/2013
Comments (incl. % achievement)	The M&E system was established from Year 1, however, project baseline measurements were not completed until Mid-term review.			
Indicator 14	Key project milestone met			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	0 Progress reports	100% sixth year targets achieved		All progress reports were received
Date achieved	09/19/2007	09/19/2013		07/14/2013
Comments (incl. % achievement)	Quarterly progress reports were submitted in a timely manner and were well prepared.			

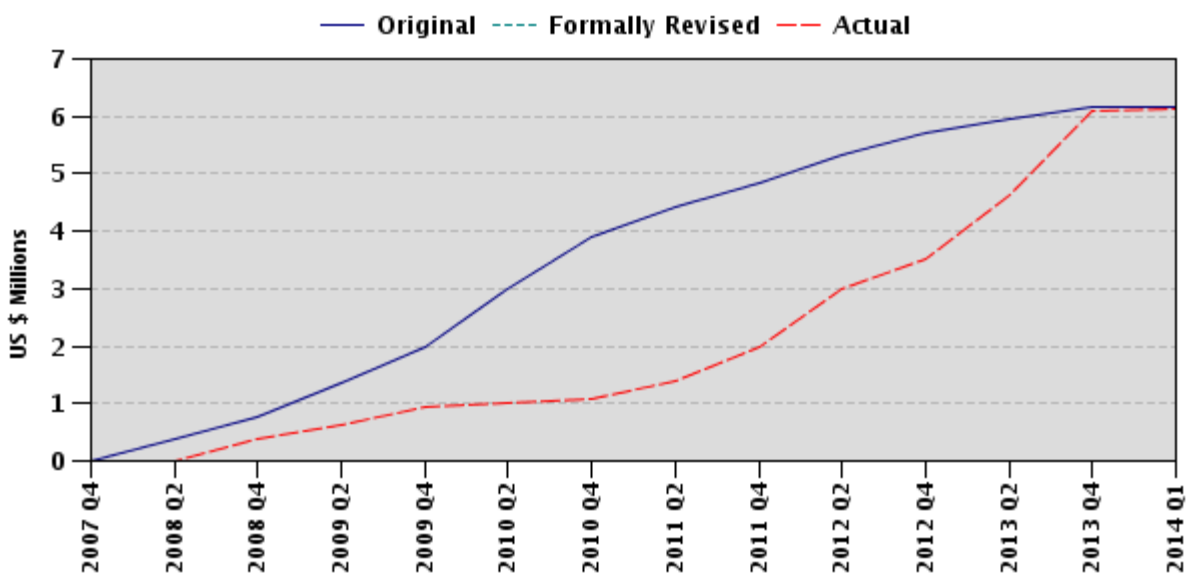
G. Ratings of Project Performance in ISRs

No.	Date ISR Archived	GEO	IP	Actual Disbursements (USD millions)
1	12/07/2007	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	0.00
2	06/19/2008	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	0.40
3	12/29/2008	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	0.63
4	06/22/2009	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	0.94
5	12/16/2009	Moderately Satisfactory	Satisfactory	1.01
6	06/30/2010	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	1.08
7	01/07/2011	Moderately Unsatisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory	1.41
8	01/02/2012	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	2.99
9	07/22/2012	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	3.97
10	08/28/2012	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	3.97
11	04/25/2013	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	5.31
12	08/17/2013	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	6.11

H. Restructuring (if any)

Not Applicable

I. Disbursement Profile



1. Project Context, Development Objectives and Design

1.1 Context at Appraisal

1. ***The Context.*** The Jordan Rift Valley (JRV) critical geographical location and great scenic interest, combined with the most productive agricultural land resources in Jordan, has made it a focal area for large-scale infrastructure, tourism development and land conversion, and climate change, all of which threaten its unique ecological and cultural values. In this context, continued unsustainable natural resources management practices have resulted in intensified land degradation in this region, which in turn has led to a deterioration of the local communities' livelihoods and water resource management issues.
2. The Government of Jordan (GOJ) has long recognized the need for targeted interventions to secure the JRV economic and ecological integrity and retain key ecological functions for the benefit of its people. While there had been a number of individual environmental and resource protection projects in the JRV, most of these had not been biodiversity-centered and had not accommodated all three pillars of the Integrated Ecosystem Management (IEM) approach: ecological, social and economic. There had been no attempt to view the JRV in development terms as a single ecological system, except with one notable exception: the JRV Master Plan developed in 2004. While the Master Plan represented a major milestone in development control by providing a large scale designation map that defines preliminary development zones and shows key conservation sites, it lacked the consultative planning processes that enable it to function effectively. As a result the degradation of this region's habitat continued, resulting in increasing biodiversity loss.
3. ***Rationale for Bank Assistance.*** The project was in line with the Jordan Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) for the period 2006-2010, which includes program clusters focused on supporting local development through increased access to services and economic opportunities. Issues of gender, environment, water and energy are crosscutting through all the program clusters. The CAS recommended environmental issues "be addressed selectively, building on their link with local development—in particular the impact of eco-system degradation on poor populations". By addressing environmental issues and promoting linkages with local development, the project was designed to show that, with proper capacities and appropriate financing mechanisms, biodiversity and conservation efforts can have positive impacts on the livelihoods of the most vulnerable communities in the region. In the context of this project, this was to be achieved through an IEM approach and local development program. **The IEM was defined as a holistic and participatory approach to land use that balances and manages ecological, social and economic components of ecosystems to ensure that biodiversity and ecological processes can be sustained under development pressure and social change.**
4. The project further provided the opportunity for an exchange of ideas and cross-fertilization with other Global Environment Facility (GEF) projects (such as the Soaring Birds Project) thus giving the possibility for the creation of an integrated ecosystem management network. At the time, national efforts to introduce, regulate, and institutionalize integrated ecosystem management were limited, and there was little integration in Jordan between conservation and rural development activities. Training programs addressing these issues and enhancing the knowledge base hardly existed, and the involvement of communities and local stakeholders in ecosystem management and land use planning remained limited.
5. ***Higher level objectives to which the project contributes.*** The establishment of protected areas in the Jordan Rift Valley supports the recommendations of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), adopted by the government in 2003, and the earlier National Environment Strategy (NES) (1992). It also helps Jordan to meet its obligations under the Convention on Biological

Diversity (CBD), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) by furthering national strategies for biodiversity conservation. The Initial Communication Report to UNFCCC recognized the need to expand Jordan's protected areas (as identified in the NES), and also the need to estimate impact of climate change on the water resources of Jordan. These plans and strategies also reinforce the importance of securing community participation and community benefits in biodiversity programs, principles that are an integral part of the project's IEM-centered approach. The project's attention to socio-economic programs likewise supports the policies of the National Poverty Alleviation Strategy (2002), which emphasizes the need to create more employment opportunities in rural areas. Furthermore, the intention to capitalize on the ecotourism potential of the proposed protected area network will support the MOTA's recently adopted national tourism strategy, which encourages further development of this niche sector.

1.2 Original Project Development Objective (PDO) / Global Environment Objective (GEO) and Key Indicators.

6. There was a slight discrepancy between the Project Development Objective (PDO) as stated in the Grant Agreement and the PDO as stated in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD). The table below summarizes the different definitions:

Table 1. PDO and GEO Definitions

Project Document	Project Appraisal Document (PAD)	Grant Agreement
Project Development Objective (PDO)	Apply the principles of integrated ecosystem management to the existing land use master plan of the Jordan Rift Valley and establish a network of well managed protected areas that meets ecological, social and economic needs.	Assist the Recipient in (i) implementing generally accepted principles of integrated ecosystem management pertaining to land use in the Jordan Rift Valley; and (ii) establishing a network of integrated ecosystem management for protected areas and special conservation areas in the Jordan Rift Valley.
Global Environment Objective (GEO)	Secure the ecological integrity of the Jordan Rift Valley as a globally important corridor.	No reference to the GEO in the Grant Agreement

7. **In the context of this project, the concept of Integrated Ecosystem Management (IEM) is defined as a holistic and participatory approach to land use that balances and manages ecological, social and economic components of ecosystems to ensure that biodiversity and ecological processes can be sustained under development pressure and social change.** This approach was to be applied in the JRV through small-scale, targeted interventions in the current land use planning framework and through the setting up of a network of conservation sites to be developed as models of the IEM approach.
8. The project development objectives were to be achieved through the following outcomes:

- Consultative planning and management procedures involving all relevant stakeholders, and based on IEM principles, successfully introduced to the Rift Valley to support the conservation of key biodiversity sites.
- A network of 4 Protected Areas (PAs) (c. 57,000 ha) and 7 SCAs in the JRV legally established and operating as models of IEM principles to support biodiversity conservation.
- Elements for ‘climate proofing’ biodiversity conservation within PAs and SCAs introduced into the conservation planning and implementation stages of the project.
- Sustainable financing mechanisms for PAs strengthened through increased capitalization of \$2 million for the endowment fund, and adoption of economically viable, nature-based livelihood options by local communities in PAs and SCAs.
- Project managed successfully, and development objective achieved through an effective monitoring program.

1.3 Revised PDO/GEO (as approved by original approving authority) and Key Indicators, and reasons/justification.

9. The PDO and GEO were not revised during the Project implementation period. However, there was a discrepancy between the formulation of the Project Development Objective (PDO) as stated in the Grant Agreement and the PDO as stated in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) (see section 1.2 above). **Considering the Grant Agreement contains a more detailed definition (with reference to SCAs) and is a legally binding document, this ICR will use the definition of the PDO as stated in the latter.**

1.4 Main Beneficiaries

10. The primary beneficiaries of the project were expected to be the communities living in and around the seven pilot areas. Marginalized groups, including women, herders and other underprivileged groups were to be actively targeted to ensure that they receive their share of benefits from project activities and are able to effectively participate in decisions regarding land use planning in general and the development of their community in particular. In accordance, the training and capacity building activities of the project were to include participatory techniques and gender sensitization as topics in the training program.

1.5 Original Components

11. The Project had five components: (1) Assessment and strategic planning for integrated ecosystem management; (2) Development of a network of biodiversity conservation sites, embodying the principles of integrated ecosystem management; (3) Integrated assessments of climate change impacts on biodiversity conservation in the JRV developed to support conservation planning and implementation; (4) Sustainable financing mechanisms for PAs strengthened; and (5) Project management, coordination, monitoring and evaluation.
12. **Component 1: Assessment and Strategic Planning for Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Jordan Rift Valley** - The objective of this component was to lay the groundwork for integrated ecosystem management in the JRV by introducing biodiversity conservation and community participation measures into the existing land use planning framework, using the proposed protected

areas and special conservation areas as pilot sites. It will also support the development of national policies for protected areas in Jordan that will embrace the principles of IEM.

13. **Outcome.** The expected outcome of this component was to successfully introduce consultative planning and management procedures involving all relevant stakeholders, and based on IEM principles, to the JRV to support the conservation of key biodiversity sites.
14. **Component 2: Development of a network of biodiversity conservation sites, embodying the principles of integrated ecosystem management** - The objective of this component was to legally establish the network of protected areas and special conservation areas defined under the land use planning framework above, and to develop management systems for these sites that become working models of IEM principles. A total of four new protected areas and seven special conservation areas were to comprise the network, representing a cross section of all key habitats and ecosystem types in the JRV. The PAs would cover a total area of 56,950 hectares and were all delineated on the JVA's land use master plan. As for the SCAs, the delineations and total areas were to be agreed upon in consultation with relevant stakeholders.
15. **Outcome.** The expected outcome of this component was to legally establish a network of 4 PAs (c. 57,000 ha) and 7 SCAs in the JRV which are operating as models of IEM principles to support biodiversity conservation.
16. **Component 3: Integrated Assessments of Climate Change Impacts on Biodiversity Conservation in the JRV Developed to Support Conservation Planning and Implementation** - The objective of this component was to assess the regional impacts of climate change on the future distribution of some major floristic groups and ecosystems dynamics in the JRV, in terms of biodiversity conservation, and incorporate the results into the conservation planning and management of PAs and SCAs. This entailed an assessment of the shifts in climatic patterns, shifts in species range (range expansion, range contraction, range extinction) and other key parameters in the context of the conservation planning (including the demarcation of boundaries, and the long-term management of PAs and SCAs). The impacts of climate change and the development of climate proofing measures would be assessed against their potential to generate social benefits.
17. **Outcome.** The expected outcome of this component was to introduce elements for 'climate proofing' biodiversity conservation within PAs and SCAs into the conservation planning and implementation stages of the project.
18. **Component 4: Sustainable Financing Mechanisms for PAs Strengthened** – Efforts were to be directed at strengthening the financial and capital bases of the Project Implementing Entity (RSCN) through the development of sustainable financing mechanisms and the raising of funds to support the management of the PAs and SCAs. This entailed to increase the capital base of RSCN's existing endowment fund, known as the Jordan Fund for Nature, from \$8.5 million to \$10.5 million. Apart from endowment fund income, several other options for meeting recurrent costs were to be pursued, including entrance charges, eco-tourism services, sales of craft products and private sector concessions.
19. **Outcome.** The expected outcome of this component was to strengthen sustainable financing mechanisms for PAs through increased capitalization of \$2 million for the endowment fund and adoption of economically viable, nature-based livelihood options by local communities in PAs and SCAs.

20. **Component 5: Project Management, Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation** - The objective of this component was to establish an effective project management unit capable of directing and supporting project implementation, liaising with stakeholders and carrying out monitoring and evaluation according to agreed indicators and support its work through the provision of goods, works, training, incremental operating costs and consultants' services.
21. **Outcome:** The expected outcome of this component was for the project to be managed successfully and development objective achieved through an effective monitoring program.

1.6 Revised Components

22. Components were not revised.

1.7 Other significant changes.

23. The need for a restructuring of the project was encouraged during the mid-term review (MTR) and the Quality Assessment of Lending Portfolio (QALP-2), mainly to (i) adjust indicators, (ii) extend the project closing date and (iii) reallocate grant proceeds to reflect the proper project needs in terms of implementation. Nonetheless, although the restructuring process was initiated twice it was never completed. An extension of the project closing date was requested in a letter dated December 13, 2012 from Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC) to the World Bank, however the decision was taken to close following six years of implementation (closing date was July 14, 2013) (see section 2.2 Implementation below).
24. The Project's design, scope, and implementation arrangements remained substantially unchanged. However, it must be noted that during the life cycle of the project there were changes in formal authority for land use planning and management. The Government of Jordan engaged in the decentralization of the land use planning authority from the single Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) to a number of regional bodies (Development Authorities), including: the Dead Sea Development Zone, Petra Development and Tourism Regional Authority (PDTRA), Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA), etc. In order to align with institutional and legal changes resulting from the creation of these new regional economic development authorities, whose legal jurisdiction now superseded that of the JVA in significant areas of the Jordan Valley, the PMU was proactive and worked closely with the regional authorities to mainstream the project objectives with the regional authorities' agenda.
25. Initially, the four proposed PAs to be targeted were: Fafa, Jabal Masuda, Qatir and Yarmouk. However, it was agreed by RSCN and the World Bank that it was of benefit to the project to pull out of Jabal Masuda which was politically intractable and where tensions with local communities persisted, and Shoubak was proposed as an alternative area representing the targeted ecosystem/habitat.
26. A correction was carried out: In a letter from the GOJ dated February 22, 2007, it was requested that all disbursements under the Project be exempted from duty and tax, including general sales tax. However, the GEF Grant Agreement signed on August 9, 2007, did not include the correct withdrawal table and the percentage of eligible expenditures under each Category that may be financed using the Grant and was revised from 90 to 100%.

2. Key Factors Affecting Implementation and Outcomes.

2.1 Project Preparation, Design and Quality at Entry

27. This was the first major project in Jordan to focus on Integrated Ecosystem Management (IEM). As such, its design has drawn on lessons learned from several previous biodiversity centered projects in the country. The projects that have contributed particularly relevant experiences and lessons learned were the GEF funded Conservation of the Dana Wildlands and Institutional Strengthening of RSCN project (1994-1999), the World Bank Second Tourism Development Project (1998-2003), the European Commission (EC) funded Birds and People in the Jordan Rift Valley Project (2001-2004), the USAID funded Socio-economic Development for Nature Conservation project (2000-2006) and the medium-sized GEF funded Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in the Dibeen Nature Reserve project (2004-2007).
28. *Building on Institutional Strengths.* The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) was selected as the implementing entity for the project. RSCN is legally mandated by the Government of Jordan to set up and manage protected area network in Jordan, and has played a special role throughout its existence in the national biodiversity programs. It has over 40 years of experience in protecting biodiversity in Jordan, during which it acquired considerable institutional and technical experience. It also has a long experience of working with other agencies, and especially government departments, giving it a wider remit than most for conservation. Therefore, the choice of RSCN as the implementing entity for this project was a logical choice taking into consideration that the RSCN was well positioned to implement this type of large-scale multi-disciplinary project, and its clear legal mandate for establishing and managing Jordan's protected areas.
29. In addition, a number of organizations were designed as partners in project implementation, either responsible for carrying out activities or as advisers, consultants or representatives of government agencies with related statutory responsibilities. While it may seem unusual for the implementing entity to be an NGO when the project requires government involvement, RSCN has a 'special standing power in the larger pools of NGOs'. However this special relationship may also limit its role whenever the interests of conservation run against the interests of stronger government agencies who may see opportunities for higher financial gains in the area¹.
30. *Building Strategy on Sound Scientific Information.* Through the GEF Dana Project the approach to protected areas management was revolutionized in Jordan. Since there has been an attempt to link conservation management planning to socio-economic development as well as to carry out full-scale ecological survey baselines and socio-economic assessments. These lessons have been institutionalized within RSCN, which now has a division capable of conducting baseline and social studies across a wide range of ecological and social parameters. For this reason, the Rift Valley project has incorporated a sizeable survey and assessment program under *Component 1* to provide data for the IEM centered land use plans and for developing conservation strategies in PAs and SCAs.
31. *Stakeholder Involvement.* Learning from GEF project experience of establishing the Dana nature reserve, which saw continued local community resistance due to perceived lack of proper consultation and wide community engagement, the Jordan IEM project, sought to ensure that local communities (in particular) and all key stakeholders were involved in the various stages of PA and SCA designation. Therefore, from its launch, the Jordan IEM project carried out extensive consultations with local communities to promote ownership and participation – a cornerstone of the IEM approach.

¹ Brand, L. A. 2001, 'Development in Wadi Rum? State Bureaucracy, External Funders, and Civil Society', International Journal of Middle East Studies 33: 575

Moreover, the project began its local community development activities early on before the actual designation took place – thus allaying local community fears of being excluded from developments that come from outside (Amman), building mutual trust between local communities and the project, and thus fostering local support for the PAs and SCAs. Engaging in broad-based consultation with national, state and local beneficiaries and stakeholders at the time of project preparation as well as a detailed socio-political assessment of the areas would have greatly facilitated project implementation to identify potential sources of risks and conflict and mitigate them before engaging in the establishment of PAs.

32. *Quality of Design.* The project was grounded in good technical analysis and drew on RSCN and government counterpart experience as well as on lessons learned from previous projects. PA selection process was based on a ranking system in which a set of criteria (including criteria on conservation value) was used for evaluating proposed sites (these criteria and sites were used and became part of the National Nature Reserve Network (MOE and RSCN 2008)); and the PAD included GEF's required management effectiveness tracking analysis of the four PAs. SCAs were carefully selected in partnership with counterpart organizations (ministries, agencies as well as the Steering Committee), and took into consideration a set of criteria to ensure an appropriate coverage of ecologically and biodiversity rich sites. A Quality Assessment of the Lending Portfolio (QALP) of the project, conducted in 2010, noted the following positive aspects of design which the ICR team concurs with: clear explanation of issues and challenges facing biodiversity conservation in the Jordan Valley; Jordan's commitment to improved environmental management; choice of RSCN as implementing entity; integration of civil society (JOHUD); and the intention to establish strong linkages with the JVA for the purpose of influencing larger land-use decisions in biodiversity-friendly ways well beyond the boundaries of existing and proposed protected areas. In addition to the above, the design of this project had inherent flexibility which allowed the Jordan IEM project to adapt to the changing context and wider political economy within the bounds of existing results framework.
33. *PDO/GEO.* The GEO expressed the **higher level and longer term objective** of what the project could achieve in longer term – which was securing the ecological integrity of the Jordan Rift Valley. The PDO, as formulated in the Grant Agreement, to 'assist the recipient in implementing generally accepted principles of IEM pertaining to land use in the JRV and establishing a network of IEM for PAs and SCAs in the JRV' offers an actual intended measurable outcome for the project, and puts in place a set of important accomplishments (capacity building, awareness raising, management plans, ecological knowledge, etc.) and partnerships which set the ground towards the achievement of the longer term and higher level objectives expressed in the GEO.
34. *Risk assessment.* Overall Project Risk was assessed as Moderate at appraisal. The PAD correctly identified a number of risks including: (i) large/complex scope of planning issues in the JRV risk to limit impact of project intervention; (ii) designating protected areas through government channels will be time consuming; (iii) community-driven conservation management will not be sustained after project ends; (iv) RSCN capacity would not be able to cope with expanding number of PAs; (v) lack of coordination/decision with partner agencies who could withdraw from the project; and (vi) the uncertainty associated with climatic shifts may undermine predictive capacity of range shifts of key species groups and the 'climatic proofing' objective. One substantial risk was identified which was that neighboring conflicts may deter international tourists from visiting Jordan. This risk materialized, particularly as a result of the Arab Spring and the ongoing conflict in neighboring Syria which is having a spillover effect on tourism trends in the country. On the whole, these risks were realistic and the risk mitigation measures were appropriate. Nonetheless, a risk which may have been identified in the PAD, given the lessons learned in the establishment of Dana reserve, was the issue of local communities' resistance to the establishment of PAs.

35. *Land issues and local community support.* A risk that the PAD was not able to predict, since the PAs were due to be established on public lands, was the delays associated with local communities' resistance to the designation of PAs due to land issues. The Arab Spring, has provided an expanded public space for gathering and expression, and several tribes took the opportunity to call for solving the issue of 'tribal fronts' – public lands that were historically located adjacent to locations of tribal settlements, and which some perceive as rights for these tribes, even though officially these are public lands. Some of the areas to be designated as protected by the project were affected by this issue, as was the case for instance in Jabal Masuda and Shoubak PAs, where local communities feared that designation of PAs will prevent chances of their future claims to these lands, and possibility of benefiting from any future increase in land value of these lands. Jabal Masuda PA was replaced with Shoubak PA, and the project carried out extensive consultations and started local community development activities early to mitigate these fears. A detailed analysis of land tenure of the potential protected areas during project design may have provided insights on the socio-political complexities on the ground.
36. *Local community engagement.* Moreover, as mentioned above, facilitating the engagement of local communities prior to project implementation would have released some of the pressure from the implementing agency, which had to spend a significant amount of time for stakeholder mobilization, setting up implementation arrangements, and policy-level engagements for the establishment of PAs and SCAs, and thereby resulted in longer leg-time before actual implementation could begin. It may also have been pertinent in the design phase, to place more emphasis on how to achieve the stated outcomes through participatory processes.

2.2 Implementation

37. The project implemented the majority of the planned activities with visible results in terms of the improvement in biodiversity conservation management in the Jordan Rift Valley including the designation of three PAs, the preparation of the designation file for the fourth PA, and the establishment of 10 SCAs.
38. The Project became effective on September 19, 2007. At the Mid-term review (MTR) in March 2011, the PDO/GEO and Implementation progress were rated as "Moderately Unsatisfactory" (MU) due to the slow activity and disbursement progress. The project, however, made a remarkable turnaround after the MTR: by the end of 2011 disbursement increased from 22% to 44%, a reflection of the much improved ongoing execution of project activities and operations, the recruitment of key individuals to deliver on the project components with the mainstream of climate change, community development and land use planning functions into RSCN, as well as improvement in communications with key government agencies which led to several breakthrough discussions with the Ministry of Environment, JVA, and Ministry of Agriculture, among other partners. By March 2012 (one year after the MTR), both the PDO and the Implementation Performance (IP) rating were raised to Satisfactory. The project was able to maintain the high pace that it established following the MTR until its closure in July 2013. Maintaining such high pace of activities that has allowed the project its remarkable turnaround, would not have been possible without the candidness and support of the Bank supervising team.

Key factors that affected project implementation included:

39. *Slow project progress up to the MTR.* Two factors contributed towards the slow project progress:
- i) *Key staff turnover:* The absence of a project manager in place in the periods from October 2008 to August 2009 and from January to November 2010 substantially delayed project implementation in the

first three years of the project. This issue was subsequently resolved with the reappointment of the project manager in 2010, and with a consolidated and fully operational PMU team there was a rapid acceleration in the implementation of project activities; and

ii) *PMU Lines of Reporting*. As the project started, the PMU was reporting to the head of the Research Department at the RSCN. This led to a lengthy and difficult decision making process. In addition, following extensive consultations, it was decided on an exceptional basis to outsource key assessments to RSCN. The single source contract was signed by the MOE as chair of the Steering Committee. This limited to some extent the range of actions that the PMU could undertake to speed the delivery of key assessments. In 2010, changes were made to shift the reporting lines for the PMU from the Research Department to the RSCN Director, which provided the PMU space and authority for better and faster decision making.

40. *Studies/consultations taking longer than expected*. A number of studies, surveys and consultations were planned to lay the groundwork for IEM in the JRV. These were delayed by several factors: (i) initial difficulties in gaining security clearance to access some of the conservation sites that are close to international boundaries; (ii) difficulties recruiting international consultants; and (iii) changes in formal authority for land use planning and management that could not have been envisaged at the time of project preparation.
41. *High level of cooperation and partnerships* was a notable feature of this project, building on and further strengthening existing inter-agency collaboration to promote conservation in the JRV. In particular the leadership and professionalism of the dedicated Project Management Unit (PMU) was critical in building strong collaboration through for instance frequent Project Steering Committee Meetings promoting information exchange among relevant partners. In addition, the project provided considerable technical assistance to local communities to help them access additional financing (for example, financing from the GEF Small Grants Program, JOHUD, etc).
42. *Applying lessons learned from previous projects*. Building on the lessons learnt in earlier projects (Dana and Dibeena nature reserves), the project did not wait for the official designation of the protected areas to start work and consultations with the local communities. Considerable consultations and local community development activities were carried out prior to formal designation of PAs and SCAs.
43. *Changing organizational, political, and regional landscape resulted in delays to designation of PAs and SCAs*. Delays were encountered in obtaining the official designations for PAs and SCAs. This was partly related to high turnover at the Ministerial levels, meaning that the base understanding on the part of new appointed Ministers of the role of the RSCN has been variable, requiring the project manager and RSCN Board to make efforts to build new relationships and explain the operational needs of the project that must be supported by the Ministry. Resistance to the legal establishment of PAs among primary stakeholders has also been an obstacle, particularly in Jabal Masuda, Shoubak and Qatar, but also to a lesser extent in Yarmouk. Moreover, the political situation with the Arab Spring spurred a higher level of resistance on the ground which could not have been envisaged. Finally, PA and SCA designation was also slowed down by development projects on the ground, for instance, the designation of Qatar PA and Wadi Bin Hammad SCA being delayed since the implementing entity was advised to wait with the designation of the sites until the completion of the Red Sea - Dead Sea Water Conveyance Study.
44. *Project extension and delays in building activities*. Given the delays noted above, the Project could have benefited from a one-year extension, especially to ensure the consolidation of project activities and to permit the materialization of project outputs in more perceptible outcomes. The PMU faced a

number of difficulties in finding suitable contractors for the construction of project site based management, community development and tourism and outreach facilities and stations planned under the project. This was mainly due to difficulties in finding competitive offers from the local contractors after almost eight months of preparation and bidding. In order to deal with these delays, the PMU was advised to apply for a level one restructuring for a one-year extension of the project closing date. However, 6 months prior to project closure, the decision was taken to close following six years of implementation (on July 14, 2013), which is consistent with the new GEF policy. The PMU noted in its last progress report for the first quarter of 2013, ‘that it perceives this unanticipated decision as seriously problematic for the project implementation and added a critical challenge to its successful completion’. In order to deliver on all project activities by the closing date, the PMU adopted an emergency plan to finalize key project activities and disburse all remaining funds. The PMU should be applauded for their ability to change gears quickly in their project planning and to contract and supervise speedily and closely the remaining civil works contracts.

2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Design, Implementation and Utilization

45. **M&E Design.** Two outcome indicators were identified: ‘coverage of key vegetation types increased in each PA’ and ‘number of hectares in which users have more environmentally benign land use practice in accordance with land use guideline and management plans’. The first outcome indicator was relevant to the GEO, while the second was relevant to the PDO, and the results indicators were relevant to the components. Moreover, the results framework provided sufficient flexibility to allow interpretation by the PMU without the need for formal restructuring. However, considering the social and economic objectives of the IEM approach, indicators should have been included to measure the economic activity/ improvements on wellbeing in the project areas, or in any case the number of project beneficiaries. There were some inconsistencies between the indicators in the PAD and the ones monitored in the ISRs, some were phrased differently and a number of indicators were missing and thus not monitored in the operations portal. However, these were adequately reported in the World Bank mission aide memoires.
46. **M&E Implementation and utilization.** Project monitoring and evaluation arrangements were clear as to who will do what and what will be measured. The project team used an adaptive approach to measure each indicator and adjusted the results according to their understanding, in part, because the Results Framework in the PAD was flexibly designed, allowing room for interpretation. Accordingly, the original indicators have been reported on in this ICR and the adjusted interpretation of the indicators is provided (see comments in Data Sheet). The completion of project baseline measurements was delayed and did not occur until the MTR. The PMU hired an M&E specialist, in charge of monitoring indicators and progress reports. Accurate and well-prepared project progress reports were submitted in a timely manner, and progress reporting was decentralized to each component and project site.
47. **Protected Area Management Effectiveness.** In line with GEF requirements, all designated protected areas used the GEF’s Protected Area Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (PAMETT). The tool rates overall protected area management according to a large number of measurable criteria. The project prepared the PAMETT every two years. Overall, the protected area management effectiveness ranged between 14% (for Shoubak PA) to 70% for Qatar and Fifa PAs, with Yarmouk PA just behind at 61%.
48. Based on the above, the **M&E is rated as Moderately Satisfactory.**

2.4 Safeguard and Fiduciary Compliance

(focusing on issues and their resolution, as applicable)

A. Safeguards

49. Safeguard policies identified in the PAD included (i) Environmental Assessment (OP 4.01), (ii) Natural Habitats (OP 4.04), (iii) Physical Cultural Resources (OP 4.11), and (iv) Involuntary Resettlement (OP 4.12).
50. *Environmental Assessment.* The project was classified as a Category B and the GOJ prepared an Environmental and Social Assessment (ESA), an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), and a Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF). The PMU was responsible for the development and implementation of a detailed M&E system to ensure the implementation of the ESMP and possible implementation of the RPF.
51. *Environmental Safeguards Compliance.* The Project Director, who has good environmental and social safeguards capacity, directly implemented and monitored ESMP compliance. Small-scale civil works construction was completed with careful PMU supervision and physical documentation. The project as designed was to have employed a part-time dedicated environment and social safeguards consultants. However, there were (i) substantial delays in the submission of the environmental safeguards biannual progress reports; as well as (ii) concurrent reports of weak to nonexistent presence in the field in support of PA and SCA staff and operations. In addition, there were substantial delays in hiring adequate social staffing support to supplement the technical skills of the environmental safeguards consultant. Hence, in addition to the delays, the project was without safeguards staffing for the last year. Nonetheless, environmental compliance on-the-ground was satisfactory.
52. *Social Safeguards Compliance.* The GOJ prepared a RPF in the case that there were OP 4.12 associated issues with the designation and implementation of PAs and SCAs. The PAs as designated were previously public lands, which prohibited any grazing, hunting, agriculture, or wood collection. Nonetheless, PA lands had been used for such purposes. Numerous stakeholder consultations preceded PA designation, and all PA implementation proceeded with a “soft designation”, whereas the community support of ecosystem based economic activity has proceeded, but any PA fencing, signage, or site-usage monitoring has not.

B. Fiduciary Compliance.

53. Early in the Project, World Bank procurement and financial specialists provided training on the Bank’s required procurement procedures – which was reinforced when there were changes in staff. Throughout the project, procurement was rated **Satisfactory**, and financial management was mostly rated **Satisfactory**. Both procurement and financial management closed with **Satisfactory** ratings.

2.5 Post-completion Operation/Next Phase

54. **Transition arrangements.** The project has shown considerable foresight and success in initiating transition arrangements well in advance of project closure. This included: mainstreaming its climate change, community development and land use functions from its PMU into RSCN two years ahead of project closure, so that by project closure these units were well integrated into the RSCN organizational structure; and the RSCN contracted the PMU staff for periods ranging from three to six months following the official closure of the project in order to ensure a smooth closure and transition.

55. In addition, the multiple field offices that must be able to make decisions in a decentralized environment, yet continuing trainings and visits to and from the RSCN offices in Amman will continue to infuse a common sense of project objectives across the PAs and SCAs. The completion of the construction of project site based management, community development and tourism and outreach facilities and stations planned under the project, and the recent operationalization of management plans, gains and achievements should be more fully realized and sustained with continuing activities building on the achievements of the past 6 years.
56. The financial sustainability of the protected areas designated as part of the project will be covered through the following: Government of Jordan contributions; the increase in the RSCN endowment fund; and through additional co-financing and the establishment of revenue-generating socio-economic and tourism activities through Wild Jordan. The RSCN business model acknowledges that some PAs will be able to cover the conservation costs more fully than others, and that some PAs will always require to be cross-subsidized by Wild Jordan commercial activities. As such, the project contributed towards the build-out of the interior space for the Wild Jordan shop at the Queen Alia International Airport, which will provide an additional important outlet for marketing products from the socio-economic projects. The 350 page RSCN transformation strategy discusses these aspects in detail.
57. RSCN, with donor support, will continue to collaborate closely with the relevant Ministries (MOE, MoPIC and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MOMA)), the JVA, as well as the Development Zones Authorities on issues of common interest in working towards sustainability of the sites. Moreover, the designation file for Shoubak protected area has been transferred to RSCN who will continue to work towards ensuring the designation of the site in collaboration with local communities, as well as in trying to resolve existing tensions in Qatar to be able to implement concrete activities on the ground. The GEF-UNDP project “Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation in Tourism Sector Development in Jordan”, which aims to mainstream biodiversity conservation into tourism sector development in Jordan as a whole and more specifically in critical areas for biodiversity in the Jordan Rift Valley, will further strengthen the achievements and will help reduce threats to biodiversity from the current and future tourism sector development in the JRV.
58. **Next phase.** Based on Government’s priorities, and as established in the Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) FY12 –FY15, the Bank does not envisage any follow-on operation in the Rift Valley, at least for the remaining period of the CPS. RSCN, is also a key partner in the recently launched GEF Badia Ecosystem and Livelihoods Project which will contribute to enhancing the sustainability of the Badia region, and will manage activities revolving around setting up and managing PAs; raising awareness of environmental issues; creating job opportunities for rural communities through ecotourism and other nature-based businesses; providing training and capacity building for environmental practitioners and other institutions; and running environmental education campaigns.

3. Assessment of Outcomes

3.1 Relevance of Objectives, Design and Implementation

59. The project objective was and continues to remain highly relevant to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and to the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems. Biodiversity conservation is an area of significant progress in Jordan, with rapid growth in the land area under protection over the last couple of decades, (expected to reach over 6% of total land area in the country, i.e. double the average of the MNA region), and a model of decentralized Protected Area (PA) management operated through a partnership with RSCN.
60. The project remains strongly aligned with existing policies on biodiversity conservation and in terms of *global priorities*, the Project is well aligned with global commitments and agreements. The establishment of protected areas in the JRV supports the recommendations of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, adopted by the government in 2003, and the earlier National Environment Strategy (NES) (1992). In the Jordan National Agenda for 2006-2015, one of the selected performance indicators for the Environment is the ‘number of nature reserves’, with targets set for 2012 at 29 nature reserves, and 33 for 2017. It also helps Jordan to meet its obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) by furthering national strategies for biodiversity conservation. The Initial Communication Report to UNFCCC recognized the need to expand Jordan’s protected areas (as identified in the NES), and also the need to estimate impact of climate change on the water resources of Jordan. These plans and strategies also reinforce the importance of securing community participation and community benefits in biodiversity programs, principles that are an integral part of the project’s IEM-centered approach. The project’s attention to socio-economic programs likewise supports the policies of the National Poverty Alleviation Strategy (2002), which emphasizes the need to create more employment opportunities in rural areas. Furthermore, the intention to capitalize on the ecotourism potential of the proposed protected area network will support the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities’ (MOTA) recently adopted national tourism strategy, which encourages further development of this niche sector.
61. In terms of the Bank’s assistance strategy, the Project’s objective contributes to the outcomes envisioned in the 2012-2015 Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) for Jordan (Report N° 58114). The Jordan CPS outcomes matrix includes better conservation and harnessing of values from natural ecosystems under the results area II.1.2: Support selected priority infrastructure (environment/waste management, which is part of the Pillar 2 of ‘strengthening the foundation for sustainable growth with a focus on competitiveness’.
62. The project as implemented has resulted in an internationally-recognized successful piloting of the landscape approach to biodiversity conservation. All of the above supports a determination that the **relevance** of objectives, as well as the project at design and at implementation close, has been **Substantial**.

3.2 Achievement of Global Environmental Objective and Project Development Objectives

Rating: Satisfactory

63. The project has made a major contribution towards achieving the longer term Global Environmental Objective (GEO) and has been **Satisfactory** in achieving both parts of the Project Development Objective (PDO).

64. **The Global Environmental Objective (GEO).** Considerable progress has been made in achieving the Global Environmental Objective of ‘securing the ecological integrity of the Jordan Rift Valley as globally important corridor’. The project has built a solid foundation for the long-term conservation of the Jordan Rift Valley, with the establishment of a corridor of PAs and SCAs through the institutionalization of an integrated ecosystem management approach of the sites by encouraging the involvement of local stakeholders and communities in the planning. Moreover, the project has been opportunistic in establishing private-public partnerships, including land set-asides of more than \$160M (for a \$6.15M GEF investment) and several signed MOUs for long-term collaboration beyond the project. Through small-scale, targeted interventions in the current land use planning framework and through the setting up of a network of conservation sites the project encouraged a holistic and participatory approach to land use that help sustain biodiversity and ecological processes under existing development pressure and social change.
65. **Project Development Objectives (PDO).** The Project disbursed all grant funds and managed to attain tangible results in achieving project development objectives to a **Satisfactory** extent, despite important start-up delays in the first three years of project implementation. The achievements of project objectives are evidenced by the successful attainment of the majority of the outcome indicators (see Table 2 below), and the fact that a number of achievements will be sustained in the long term. Moreover, the Jordan IEM project was particularly innovative in Jordan by mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into the land use planning using a participatory approach, and through the introduction and the application of the principles of integrated ecosystem management in the Rift Valley. Moreover, it must be noted, that the JO-IEM was the first project examining the effects of climate change on biodiversity, with pilot approaches to measure change. Finally, the project drew on important lessons learned from the Dana Nature Reserve project, carried out in the 1990s, particularly, on the need to apply a ‘bottom-up’ approach, with great emphasis on community participation and capacity building, by for instance ensuring the recruitment of local staff to manage protected areas.
66. The subsequent paragraph, will review in more details how project objectives were achieved by examining individually each objective of the two-fold PDO as defined in the Grant Agreement:

(i) ‘Implementing generally accepted principles of integrated ecosystem management pertaining to land use in the Jordan Rift Valley’.

Rating: Satisfactory

In order to ensure IEM principles are integrated within the broader JRV landscape, the following activities were successfully completed:

- ***The ecosystem approach and biodiversity conservation was mainstreamed into the land use planning frameworks, processes and plans*** of five national and regional development agencies (Development Zone Commission (DZC), Petra Development and Tourism Regional Authority (PDTRA), Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MOMA), Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA), and JVA) rather than just one JVA as envisaged during project design. During the project, in order to align with institutional and legal changes resulting from the creation of new regional economic development authorities, whose legal jurisdiction now supersedes that of the JVA in significant areas of the Jordan Valley, the PMU was proactive and worked closely with the regional authorities to mainstream project objectives with the regional authorities’ agenda. Moreover, the project developed and adopted three biodiversity oriented land use guidelines with MOMA, MOE, and the DZC.

- ***Increased awareness at local, national and regional levels of the importance of biodiversity, the need for protected areas, and the linkages between environmental management and livelihood opportunities.*** The development of a number of knowledge management products for the sites, as well as a number of capacity building training activities in the targeted areas have increased awareness on the ecological importance of the sites and enhanced capacity for biodiversity conservation through targeted training. Moreover, in response to the changing institutional context, the project implemented a comprehensive awareness raising program for all project stakeholders twice – at inception and midterm - rather than once as per the project design.
- ***Developing a biodiversity oriented climate change program within RSCN.*** Initially, the project only intended to undertake baseline assessment for climate change and biodiversity. However, the project mainstreamed climate change and land use functions from its PMU into RSCN two years ahead of project closure and was able to go all the way to institutionalizing the climate change program nationally within the Department of Meteorology. Additionally, RSCN went beyond the objectives originally envisioned within this component by preparing a set of adaptation strategies to be implemented within and beyond PAs, the implementation of a series of pilot adaptation projects in project sites, and the development of a long term development strategy for its newly established climate change unit.
- ***The project has shown considerable foresight and success in mainstreaming climate change and land use functions from its PMU into RSCN*** two years ahead of project closure. This includes progress on establishing land use planning and climate change units in RSCN, with a mandate to mainstream IEM into national and regional land use planning initiatives. The integration of these two functions within RSCN should contribute to sustain project achievements in the long term.
- ***Improved ecological and socio-economic knowledge of the sites.*** RSCN project team successfully completed all ecological, social and economic assessments in the selected PAs and SCAs, and hence enhancing the existing knowledge on the biodiversity value of these sites, and monitoring of biodiversity. The project conducted baseline assessments (ecological and socio-economic) for five protected areas (Yarmouk, Fifa, Masuda, Qatar and Shoubak) and ten SCAs (Shuleh, Tal Al Arbaeen, Birket Al-Arayes, Ma'awa, Khayyounf, Swaimah Park and Homret Maeen, Wadi Bin Hammad, Rahmah, and ABO) originally intended for four protected areas and seven SCAs.
- ***Additional co-financing secured to that anticipated at project design.*** The project successfully raised its endowment fund by \$2 million as envisaged, prepared two pilot business plans (1 PA and 1 SCA) and developed four strategic business development plans (2 PAs and 2 SCAs). Moreover, despite the global financial crisis and associated limitations in funding, the project achieved its intended co-financing targets. Whilst some agencies reduced the originally envisaged co-financing amount, RSCN was able to secure new sources of co-financing, in addition to the land set asides estimated at \$120M.

(ii) Establishing a network of integrated ecosystem management for protected areas and special conservation areas in the Jordan Rift Valley.

Rating: Satisfactory

- A total of 3 Protected Areas out of the 4 originally planned in the PAD have been legally designated under the project. Moreover, whereas the PAD specifies that the project would

establish 7 SCAs, the project has been opportunistic in facilitating the establishment of 10 SCAs. Biodiversity is now better conserved in the 3 designated PAs and the 10 SCAs, with the consolidation and validation of Management Plans which were prepared through participatory consultations with local communities.

- ***The project introduced in Jordan the concept of Special Conservation Areas (SCAs).*** The SCAs are a new concept to Jordan and represent a departure from more conventional notion of protected sites. SCAs are locally based management structures developed for integrating community action with the land-use planning, and in the network are generally smaller sites, and as such they play specific ecological roles, and help through the implementation of sustainable land use practices to ensure the ecological connectivity along the JRV. Besides, the establishment of SCAs offers an innovative management alternative to PAs towards a more community based and private sector based management model to conservation. Like the PA management plans, the Community-Driven Conservation Plans prepared under the project embody the principles of IEM. With the establishment of 10 SCAs, situated in different habitat types, the project improved the ecological connectivity along the existing network of PAs in the JRV.
- ***The Project established three protected areas (Qatar, Fifa, and Yarmouk) and set up important groundwork to facilitate the designation of Shoubak in the near future.*** The project successfully designated three conventional protected areas and was able to operationalize two. A set of socio economic activities and initiatives were developed for each protected area based on participatory consultations. The designation file for the Shoubak protected area was transferred to RSCN before project closure and RSCN will continue to work towards ensuring the designation of the site in collaboration with local communities, as well as in trying to resolve existing tensions in Qatar to be able to implement in a near future concrete activities on the ground.

Nevertheless, the designation of Shoubak remains a major challenge, although RSCN has been proactive in working towards the designation of the site. As a matter of fact, RSCN has held more than 60 community consultations and through the IEM project it has hired rangers and is supporting local community initiatives implemented in the area which are of benefit to the locals. Furthermore, the IEM has launched a new strategy for the development of tourism as an incentive to gain local awareness and support, and an ecotourism master plan has been prepared to form the basis for stakeholders' engagement and consultation on the strategic development options for the region. Thus, it would not be surprising, if in the coming months, Shoubak is officially designated. The remaining activities left incomplete in the already-designated PAs, as well as implementation of the management plan for Shoubak once designated, have been financed.

- ***Through the preparation of PA Management Plans and SCA Community Development Plans, local communities defined options for alternative livelihoods and sustainable management of their natural environment and associated biodiversity.*** Through the preparation of management plans the economic development of PAs and SCAs is now better integrated with conservation strategies and social programs, in line with IEM principles. For that purpose, new on-site staff teams have been recruited and trained and essential infrastructure and equipment were provided (management stations, staff offices, ranger posts and visitor centers and ecotourism facilities).
- ***Ecotourism and other socio-economic enterprises developed within and around PAs/SCAs.*** Moreover, a set of pilot socio-economic activities were developed for PAs and SCAs based on local needs and context. These initiatives included activities related to ecotourism, sustainable agriculture and handicraft but also activities that sometimes went beyond the conventional models

such as the first highway rest-house and commercial outlets in community based management stations.

- ***Lessons learned from the application of the IEM documented, promoted and institutionalized.***
The Project team worked towards the development of a comprehensive knowledge management system with the preparation of over 50 knowledge products, which included among others, fact sheets, posters, a picture book, short films as well as a set of brochures for the sites).

67. The achievements of project objectives are evidenced by the successful attainment of the majority of the outcome indicators presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Jordan IEM Project Key Performance Indicators and Outcomes

Components	Results Indicators for Each Component	Status of Corresponding Component Outputs at ICR
<i>Component 1</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JVA publishes updated land use planning maps that define PA and SCA boundaries determined in consultation with communities. • Land use guidelines for the Jordan Rift Valley prepared. • Protected Area policy developed through a consultative process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land use planning maps prepared in consultation with local communities and adopted by the JVA • Land use guidelines prepared and adopted with MOMA, MOE and DZC
<i>Component 2</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 PAs and 7 SCAs legally established. • Management plans published for all PAs and SCAs • PAs staff recruited and management plans operational • Alternative livelihood options and nature based enterprises adopted by communities in SCAs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 PAs and 10 SCAs legally established • All Management Plans have been published • PAs staff recruited and 2 PA Management Plans are operational. • Alternative livelihood options and nature based enterprises identified in SCAs (i.e. mushroom, soap, ecotourism)
<i>Component 3</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Climate proof’ elements incorporated into the management plans and zoning of PAs and community-driven conservation plans of SCAs. • Improved information on climate proofing made available to relevant entities outside PAs and SCAs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management plans of PAs and SCAs include climate proofing elements. Moreover, the project identified a series of pilot adaptation strategies and prepared a long term climate change strategy program. • Development of a national platform for communication and coordination of climate change and biodiversity with the Jordan Meteorological Department (JMD) and MOE.
<i>Component 4</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) raises its endowment by US\$ 2 million • Private sector engagement increased by 20% against base year 2006 • RSCN prepares business plans for each PA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSCN raised its endowment fund by US\$ 2million. • Private sector engagement increased and included: (i) Hotel Movenpick arrangement in Aqaba Bird Observatory (ABO) to offer shuttles for tourists to ABO, (ii) MOU with Dead Sea Company, (iii) agreements with local companies (soap, mushrooms), (iv) concessions for camp sites in Yarmouk PA and Khayyounf and Wadi Bin Hammad SCAs.
<i>Component 5</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M&E system established and used (including to generate progress reports) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress reports were submitted in a timely manner

Components	Results Indicators for Each Component	Status of Corresponding Component Outputs at ICR
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key project milestones met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key project milestones were met

3.3 Efficiency

(Net Present Value/Economic Rate of Return, cost effectiveness, e.g., unit rate norms, least cost, and comparisons; and Financial Rate of Return)

Rating: Substantial

68. The Project was a stand-alone GEF project with a GEF grant of US\$6.15 million and counterpart funding from partner government agencies and non-governmental organizations.
69. In accordance with the GEF requirements, an incremental cost analysis was carried out during project preparation. The objective of the incremental cost analysis was to assess the additional costs accruing to Jordan for protecting its important biodiversity base. The GEF incremental costs were estimated at US\$6.15 million, and additional non-GEF incremental costs were estimated at US\$6.55 million, with a total of US\$12.70 million (World Bank 2007). At the time the Project was designed, financial or economic analyses were not prepared, and no standard cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness parameters were calculated. As such, these would be difficult to calculate ex-post. However, the following are used as indicators of the cost effectiveness of the project activities:
70. **Project results are achieved within planned timeframe and budget:** The GEF funds were fully disbursed as originally planned: within the originally planned timeframe and per the originally planned expenditure categories (unaudited final financial report provided by the RSCN), and the project achieved its intended outcomes and objectives to a satisfactory degree, as detailed in Annex 2, achieving and exceeding its targets with the level of GEF funding available at appraisal.
71. **Cost of establishment of PAs and SCAs and management costs are in line with ranges reported in literature:** Bruner et al (2009) estimated a range for establishing new protected areas up to US\$31,180 per km², depending on whether land purchase or compensation is required. The study noted that establishment costs of new protected areas are always higher than the management costs for existing areas due to potential requirements of land purchases or compensation, as well as definite need for construction of infrastructure and purchase of equipment.
72. The total project is \$6.15 million, of these approximately \$3 million were the cost for the establishment of new PAs and SCAs with an approximate area of 361km². This translates into an average cost of establishing new PAs and SCAs of \$8,310/Km², which is in line with the range determined in literature taking into consideration that no land purchase or compensation is included in this figure, as all lands were either public lands or land set asides.
73. The project also provided some level of management activities for the PAs and SCAs. The cost of management activities is approximately \$475,000, for an average of 6 years for most PAs and SCAs (since in many cases the management plans and work with community preceded the official designation). This translates to about US\$219/km² /year (approximately \$2.2/Ha/year) – which is in line with ranges reported in literature (Bruner et al 2009, James et al 1999).
74. **The project resulted in increase of Jordan Rift Valley area under legally established network of PAs and SCAs by 4%:** As a total, the Jordan Rift Valley in Jordan consists of the Northern Ghor, Middle Ghor and the Southern Ghor areas with a total land area of approximately 30,961 Ha. For the

purpose of this project, the Jordan Rift Valley was considered in its broadest terms to include also the valley floor (i.e. Jordan River Valley, Wadi Araba and its extension up to Aqaba) and the adjacent highlands parallel to the valley bottom – with a total estimated area of approximately 910,000 hectares. The project has contributed towards establishment of three protected areas with a total land area of **15,320** Ha and 10 special conservation areas with a total land area of **13,050** Ha. As such, the project has resulted in increase in 3% in area of Jordan Rift Valley that is part of a legally established network of PAs and SCAs. It has also set the foundation (including completing needed assessments and consultations, preparing a management plan and local community development activities) for the establishment of a fourth protected area (Shoubak PA with an estimated area of **7,740** Ha) – which will raise the land area under PAs and SCAs to 4%.

75. The significance of the established PAs and SCAs is higher when considering the vegetation representation: the project led to increase in vegetation cover types under integrated ecosystem management, such as the deciduous oak (increase from 0% to 3.65%), and mudflat and saline vegetation (increase from less than 1% to almost 4% each) that were not previously reflected in Jordan's national protected area network.
76. **The project generated considerable co-financing:** Project co-financing of US\$6.55 million was expected during project appraisal from RSCN, JOHUD, IUCN, enhanced productivity program, MOE, and MOTA. Not all of the originally envisaged co-financing came through (e.g. the enhanced productivity program closed by time project activities were in full swing), nevertheless the project managed to leverage considerable co-financing. In 2012, the co-financing was estimated at US\$3.5 million. In addition the project successfully leveraged additional resources, e.g. the MOTA provided resources to support the special conservation areas such as the Umm Qais complex (estimated in kind at US\$24,000), rest area in Wadi Bin Hammad (estimated in kind contribution at US\$250,000), and the Dead Sea Panorama (estimated in kind contribution at US\$360,000). Table 3 below details the estimated additional resources for PAs and SCAs.

Table 3. Estimated catalytic financing generated by the project.

Site/Program	Contribution	Institution	In cash	In Kind
Yarmouk/Shuleh	Um Qais Station	MOTA	-	24,000
	Shuleh Panorama	MOTA	-	240,000
	JOHUD Station	JOHUD	-	30,000
Homret Maeen	Panorama Complex	MOTA	-	360,000
	Ecopark Fencing	JDZ	-	100,000
Wadi Bin Hammad	Visitor Centre	MOTA	-	250,000
	Tourism Development	GEF SGP	40,000	-
Aqaba Bird Observatory	Management Station	ASEZA	-	300,000
Climate Change	Meteo Stations	JMD	-	60,000
	Training	USFS	-	10,000
Project Logistics	10 cars	RSCN	400,000	-
Rahmah	Management Station	JOHUD	-	18,000
Shoubak	Tourism Master plan	USAID/RSCN	500,000	-
Tal Al Arbaeen	Agriculture Pilot	GEF SGP	30,000	-
	SCA support	Birdlife	20,000	-
Fifa	Agriculture Pilot	GEF SGP	30,000	-
Hima Layathneh	Management Station	PDTRA	-	7,200
		Subtotal	1,020,000	1,399,200
		Total	2,419,200	

Source: Jordan IEM Project.

77. **The project resulted in a number of catalytic activities:** These included:

- a. **Mainstreaming of climate change, land use planning and community development into core RSCN work.** This is an important byproduct of the project given that RSCN is one of the largest local NGOs with the official mandate to manage protected areas in Jordan. The shift from strictly conservation focus to working with local communities was especially noted by the project and the RSCN staff with whom the ICR team met.
- b. **Leveraging additional resources for community needs:** The SCAs and the PAs are located in areas with increased poverty and some in identified pockets of poverty areas (e.g. Fifa protected area). The communities have benefited not only in terms of protection and use of the natural resources, but also in terms of leveraging funds both for biodiversity conservation needs (the project was successful in bridging local cooperatives in some of the SCA areas with the GEF Small Grants Program in Wadi Bin Hammad; Tal Al Arbaeen; and Fifa) but also their own community needs (e.g. the project supported the local community cooperatives by providing premises and technical assistance. This allowed these cooperatives to better support their members and to reach out to other agencies and organizations for support with technical assistance from the project). The project activities helped highlight the needs of these communities, also resulting in increased attention to their needs from both the Government and private sector (e.g. the Arab Potash Company director visited a community event, and committed approximately USD 500 thousand for the needs of local communities).
- c. **Creating champions in local communities, private sector and government agencies:** the project was successful in creating champions for continued integrated ecosystem management in PAs and SCAs among the local communities, and private sector and government agencies. For example, the **Dead Sea Company** provided land set asides and integrated the SCA into their land use maps. The **Ministry of Environment** relied on guidelines prepared by the project for the approval of SCAs and which remain in their use following completion of project activities. Reliance on PA staff from local communities and training creates local champions close to the PAs within the local communities. The SCA concept also proved popular among **local communities** keen on safeguarding the local environmental resources with local organizations mobilizing to establish 6 additional SCAs beyond those envisioned by the project (files for 6 additional SCAs were submitted for MOE for approval).

78. Based on the above, it is possible to conclude that the implementation of this project was: (i) **Efficient** in terms of leveraging GEF funds and (ii) **Cost-effective** in terms of achieving the PDO.

3.4 Justification of Overall Outcome Rating

(combining relevance, achievement of PDOs, and efficiency)

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

79. Based on the combination of substantial relevance of objectives, design and implementation; satisfactory achievement of both parts of the PDO; and substantial efficiency; the overall outcome rating is **Moderately Satisfactory**.

80. The project was able to achieve most of its set targets and to generate important and significant outcomes as mentioned above, and with more details provided in Annex 2. A wealth of research results has been produced about the fauna and flora in the project sites, and strong collaborative partnerships have been established with local research institutions. Moreover, long term involvement and collaboration has been reinforced in project sites with the signature of a number of MOUs with

relevant Ministries (MOE, MoPIC and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MOMA)), the JVA, as well as the Development Zone Authorities on issues of common interest in working towards sustainability of the sites. The management and planning capacity of the parks has been upgraded with the preparation of management plans, the recruitment of locally hired rangers and the construction of necessary basic infrastructures.

81. Minor shortcomings have resulted from two issues: (i) Project efficiency; which stagnated in years 2 and 3 without a Project Manager to lead staff; and (ii) Changes in country conditions and sectoral context; which prompted minor deviations from activities as designed during preparation. These shortcomings may possibly have been prevented if the project would have been granted a one-year extension. Shoubak was not designated by the end of the project, and only 2 out of the 4 PAs were operational (Fifa and Yarmouk). Although Qatar PA has been legally designated, it is in the early stages of management plan implementation. Furthermore, the necessary basic infrastructures were constructed just on time before project closure, and these delays and the lack of a project extension has meant that a lot of activities have not resumed on the ground yet, especially with regards to ecotourism and the operationalization of related activities as established in the management plans. While, the project has established a solid foundation for the long-term conservation of the JRV, a lot of the project outcomes should be more perceptible in the coming months when activities resume on the ground.
82. The GEO also overstates what a project of this scale can achieve, ‘restore the ecological integrity of the JRV’. Hence, despite a considerable number of project achievements and the likelihood that a lot of the project outcomes will be more visible in the coming years, it is too premature to assert that all project objectives have been attained and a lot will depend on the developments in the coming months and the consolidation of project achievements. Hence, for all these reasons, the rating at this stage is deemed to be **Moderately Satisfactory**.

3.5 Overarching Themes, Other Outcomes and Impacts

(a) Poverty Impacts, Gender Aspects, and Social Development

83. **Poverty and gender impacts:** The protected areas and the special conservation areas are located in rural areas that are often characterized by high incidence of poverty and high unemployment rates. The project’s contribution to the livelihood of the local communities has also demonstrated tangible benefits. The project aimed to ensure that the communities perceive that the projects work not only for the benefit of ‘conservation’ but also that they see direct benefits to themselves. This aspect has been highlighted in several conversations with local communities.
84. The construction/rehabilitation of social infrastructures as well as the promotion of income generating activities resulted in concrete improvements in the living conditions of the local populations. The project has entailed the recruitment of over 30 rangers for the management of the sites. Furthermore, a number of small livelihood options and nature enterprises have been launched in some of the project sites, with for instance small cooperatives having benefited from training in soap and mushroom production as well as aquaculture, and now starting to work towards the marketing of these products. In particular, women are benefiting since they are directly involved in several of the income generating activities. Moreover, as was raised by some of the project beneficiaries in Fifa, prior to the project there was no interest in the region, however now they noted an influx of private sector investments. Finally, the development of ecotourism in the sites should in the long term offer a window of opportunities for the economic development of the targeted sites.

85. As mentioned above, the total number of beneficiaries that were estimated from community development work by the project is over 66,000, half of whom are estimated to be women. This estimate is based on the number of beneficiaries from partnership and socio-economic initiatives carried out by the project in the vicinity of PAs and SCAs, and include members of local and women cooperatives who carried out the initiatives, users of the infrastructure developed by the project, visitors to the Umm Qais center (estimated at 10,000) and Forestry Department Staff (estimated at 750). However, this is a conservative number as it does not take into consideration results from the catalytic activities (those initiatives that were supported by other agencies as a result of raising awareness on these communities due to establishment of PAs and SCAs).

(b) Institutional Change/Strengthening

86. The project activities have resulted in the mainstreaming of three new units within the structure of the RSCN: Climate Change, Land Use, and Community Development. The project has also made important contribution towards changing RSCN's approach towards the establishment of protected areas and special conservation areas. In the past, RSCN used to apply a more scientific focus on biodiversity and conservation through scientific and ecological assessments. One of the main lesson learnt which the ICR team heard from many RSCN and project staff, is the shift towards working together with local communities through the application of participatory processes to mainstream the ownership feeling of the sites before proceeding with the official designation of a protected area or an SCA.
87. One of the specific aims of the project has been to increase local capacity for conservation of the sites, and towards that end the project has achieved the following concrete levels of institutional strengthening: (i) a better management structure in the sites with management plans, infrastructure and by providing the minimum essential tools and staffing, targeted training of protected area management and rangers, setting up the systems for monitoring and follow up, (ii) initiation of partnerships with the key partners for collaboration in the management and development of the sites, (iii) institutionalizing the mechanisms of involvement of the communities in the management of the sites. All in all, given the scope and funds of the project, these activities should be seen as a key first step and pilot demonstration towards improved protected area management at the national level.

(c) Other Unintended Outcomes and Impacts

88. There are several encouraging signs that the project's activities and outcomes are generating catalytic effects. A major outcome has been the introduction of the SCA concept which is new for Jordan, and which through the project has fuelled an increasing interest from local communities who see SCAs as an opportunity for local development but also to ensure the sustainability of their natural environment. As a matter of fact, the ICR mission was informed both by RSCN and the MOE of an increasing demand by local communities in the designation of these areas. Moreover, this has also encouraged within the existing SCAs more fostered and formal organization of local community groups, which has been facilitated by the project and the construction of needed infrastructure including buildings for the management of the SCAs.
89. Furthermore, an unintended positive outcome, already mentioned above, is that project investments and the designation of SCAs and PAs has attracted the interest of outside investors and agencies in some of the sites, which was non-existent prior to the Project.
90. RSCN through the project, has also reinforced with the creation of a land use unit within its quarters, its capacity to influence larger land-use activities and the integration of biodiversity conservation principles through the creation of SCAs but also through the implementation of additional activities

which were not originally planned under the scope of the project including (i) the preparation of an ecological sensitivity maps which will be used by MOMA and to identify potential future SCAs; (ii) the preparation of guidelines for wind energy project, particularly since the JRV is an important bird area; and (iii) the preparation of clear guidelines and criteria for Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA).

4. Assessment of Risk to Development Outcome

Rating: Moderate.

91. **The Risk that the PDO outcomes will not be sustained is assessed as moderate.** The project has achieved solid outcomes which have enhanced the local capacity to conserve the ecological integrity of the JRV. Nevertheless, the broader development patterns in and around the PAs and SCAs could jeopardize the sustainability of the project.
92. In addition, the established PAs / SCAs may be overshadowed by the Red Sea-Dead Sea Water Conveyance Project should it go ahead. This refers in particular to the prospect of an ambitious water transfer scheme between the Red Sea and the Dead Sea, which would be to traverse two of the project's intended sites (Qatar and Fifa), and for which the feasibility studies have been funded by the World Bank. The Jordan IEM project has contributed towards the environmental assessment studies for the Red Sea – Dead Sea Water Conveyance Project – particularly to the baseline survey. The ICR team will also share the ICR report with the concerned team at the Bank. Moreover, this identified risk is mitigated by increased cooperation between Bank projects and within relevant agencies in the government of Jordan.
93. **Political Instability.** Political instability in the region and neighboring conflicts may deter international tourists from visiting Jordan. This could have a spillover effect on tourism trends in the country, and as such on the economic sustainability of the sites, and could jeopardize their capacity to exploit the ecotourism potential of the sites.

5. Assessment of Bank and Borrower Performance

5.1 Bank

(a) Bank Performance in Ensuring Quality at Entry

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

94. The project initiation coincided with global, regional and national circumstances that significantly changed the realities on the ground. These included: financial crisis (2008); Jordan's decentralization efforts which resulted in establishment of new regional authorities in the JRV; the Arab Spring and regional conflict. These changes required the project to adapt, and one of the key strengths of the design was that it had inherent flexibility that allowed the project to adapt to the changing political economy without the need to modify the outcomes and outputs of the project. The project design also took into consideration lessons learnt from earlier projects, including building strategy on sound scientific information; stakeholder involvement in PAs designation; and community participation in PAs and the role of economic incentives.
95. QALP-2 review acknowledged the following strengths of the design: good explanation of issues and challenges in the appraisal report, the demonstrated good commitment by Jordan to improve environmental management, the choice of RSCN, the connections with the JOHUD and other NGOs for the community development activities, as well as the linkages with the JVA for the purpose of influencing larger land-use decisions in biodiversity-friendly ways.
96. In terms of design flaws, the project design underestimated the risks associated with land ownership issues. In addition, as identified in QALP-2: the design had an insufficient incorporation of regionally driven political risks into the project design; and lack of discussion of alternative approaches.

(b) Quality of Supervision

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

97. The project was supervised by two task team leaders over its lifetime, both based in Washington DC. The World Bank staff provided regular (generally twice per year) supervision inputs during Project implementation, with additional support from the Cairo and Beirut offices for procurement and financial management issues as needed. Findings and recommendations from supervision missions were documented in detailed aide memoires throughout Project implementation. The Project benefited from constructive suggestions from Bank's mid-term review.
98. Bank supervision missions were staffed with specialists covering the main subject matters, who provided regular guidance and support to the client during implementation. The Bank supervision teams were proactive in proposing remedial actions to help RSCN make up for the startup delays in project implementation and pending issues, and supporting the client in aligning the project to the priority needs and the changing context. Moreover, the missions consistently raised the main issues as they emerged – including: the shortcomings in the general management of the project in the first years of implementation, the absence of a safeguard specialist and the need for restructuring and project extension. Next steps matrices were prepared in the Aide-Mémoire that clearly summarized the main outstanding issues to be addressed.
99. The QALP-2 identified weaknesses in Bank supervision related to budget, time in the field, attention from management, and candor and realism of ISR reporting. In addition, there was delay in notifying the project that the requested one year extension was not granted. However, it should be noted that

Bank supervision was instrumental in helping the PMU to turn around the project, after the MTR, from its problem project status with low disbursement and slow activities, to achieving all the intended outcomes and the full disbursement within the initially planned time. Also, the supervision team went above and beyond in assisting the PMU during the final months after it became clear that the extension was not granted. The turnaround of the project and the timely completion of its activities would not have been possible without the dedication and concerted effort of the Bank supervision team including the TTL, and the procurement and financial management specialists.

(c) Justification of Rating for Overall Bank Performance

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

100. Taking into consideration the quality at entry and the quality of supervision, the overall Bank performance is rated **Moderately Satisfactory**. The Bank provided significant technical guidance and support to the client during project implementation, which has contributed to the overall successful project outcome.

5.2 Borrower

(a) Government Performance

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

101. The Government of Jordan showed excellent commitment to this project embracing the participatory protected area management approach and integrating it into its national biodiversity strategy. Over the lifetime of the project, the Government demonstrated commitment through regular follow-up and support from the relevant government agencies, including:
- i. MOE who supported the establishment of SCAs (relying on instructions number 4719 / 2005 allowing the Minister of Environment to designate SCAs), and prepared and submitted for approval the designation files for the PAs (up to 3 times for the Shoubak PA which however ended up not being designated);
 - ii. MOPIC in its coordination role provided the chairmanship for the project steering committee as well as follow up with the Ministry of Interior;
 - iii. MOTA in its support in the implementation of the 2011-2015 tourism development strategy, which emphasized the need to improve opportunities for local tourism and accessibility of the Kingdom's natural assets to the general public, was particularly supportive of the projects pilots in introducing local collaborative arrangements for improving the sustainable management of recreational sites; and
 - iv. Cooperation with the JVA was instrumental with regards to mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into land use planning and the IEM approach into its master plan.
 - v. Finally, it must be noted the JVA, the Dead Sea Development Zone Company and the MOTA provided considerable cofinancing for this project (mostly in facilities (Umm Qais, Wadi Bin Hammad rest area, and Dead Sea Panorama) and land set asides for PAs and SCAs (JVA). These agencies have also been participating in regular project Steering Committee meetings.
102. There were also shortcomings, including: (i) high turnover in project Steering Committee meetings which reduced their effectiveness; (ii) delays associated with designation of PAs due to Government moratorium on management plans for Fafa and Qatar until the Red Sea- Dead Sea Water Conveyance Study was completed and alignment was clarified; (iii) more support could have been provided to the RSCN/PMU in reaching out to the new regional development agencies following

the decentralization process which changed the agency landscape in the Jordan Valley and pushed the IEM to deal and bring on board new players.

(b) Implementing Agency or Agencies Performance

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

103. The leadership, cohesion, and professional skills displayed by the PMU in the last 3 years of project life were integral to the successful implementation of the Project and full disbursement of the Grant amount. The PMU effectively took this project on board and supported it through management, various departments, and through their mandate and expertise. The PMU was adequately staffed with most of the personnel recommended, yet it had no dedicated safeguard specialist in the last years of implementation. Progress reports were submitted in a timely manner and were well structured. The Implementing Agency successfully:

- i. Lead the designation of 3 PAs and 10 SCAs in a changing political and economic climate
- ii. Maneuvered to align with the ongoing changes in the institutional landscape (decentralization from a centrally planned JVA to regional development agencies) that significantly challenged one of the key outcomes of the project and chose the correct strategy to bring the new players on board;
- iii. Substituted Jabal Masuda site by the Shoubak site considering it represented the targeted ecosystem/habitat, and accepted to take on the designation file for Shoubak following project closure to continue to work towards its designation in collaboration with local communities;
- iv. Mobilized important co-financing to the project from different sources; and
- v. Mainstreamed the climate change, community development, and land use units during the 3rd year of the project to ensure full integration into RSCN organizational chart.

104. Shortcomings included:

- i. Delay in modifying the reporting lines of the PMU from the Head of the Research Department to the Director General, which allowed faster decision making to the PMU;
- ii. Delay in executing the assessments that were sole contracted to RSCN;
- iii. Weaknesses in implementing monitoring and evaluation for the project.

(c) Justification of Rating for Overall Borrower Performance

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

105. On a whole, the performance of the Borrower is deemed **Moderately Satisfactory**, in recognition of the moderately satisfactory performance of the Government and the implementing agency. The project was a pioneering pilot, which managed during the latter years to turn around its performance and meet, **and in some instances surpass, its set objectives. Moreover, RSCN has taken important, positive steps to follow up with the project objectives and thereby to sustain and consolidate Project achievements.**

6. Lessons Learned

106. **Readiness for implementation is key to effective start up and participatory planning needs to be started at the preparatory stage.** Considering project performance stagnated in the first 3 years of implementation with the absence of a Project Manager, it proves critical to allow for effective start-up upon effectiveness, to ensure the necessary institutional set up is in place and a fully operational team available. Moreover, given the importance of the participatory planning process in this project, engaging in broad-based consultation with national, state and local beneficiaries and stakeholders at the time of project preparation as well as a detailed socio-political assessment of the areas would have greatly facilitated project implementation to identify potential sources of risks and conflict and mitigate them before engaging in the establishment of PAs.
107. **The project demonstrated non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as RSCN with strong technical capacity, a clear mandate, and proven experience in nature conservation make it a unique candidate to implement this type of project.** Hence, a unique feature of this project was the fact that the implementing agency was an NGO. However, it must be noted that RSCN, is the largest environmental organization in Jordan, and as such has been granted a special mandate in Jordan to manage and control the national system of protected areas, which guarantees a certain level of stability in the project.
108. **The development of sustainable socio-economic and conservation projects as an entry point to strengthening relationships with local communities prior to Protected Area designation.** This has been a lessons learned for RSCN, which in the case of Shoubak is currently working on developing ecotourism for the benefit of local communities in an attempt to gain communities trust to subsequently designate the site as a PA. A similar approach is being applied in the Badia Ecosystems and Livelihoods Project (P127861), where engaging on the ground with communities and working on the development of an ecotourism corridor is regarded as a first step to work towards future designation of some of the sites.
109. **Identifying priority needs in the targeted areas as parallel activities to finance in order to gain community support for the designation of the sites.** RSCN funded several infrastructural needs that were demanded by local communities during stakeholder consultations which facilitated the adhesion of local stakeholders to the project. This included for instance the restoration of a heritage Mosque in Yarmouk PA as well as the construction of 10 bus stops in Fife PA. This type of initiatives coupled with consultations and community involvement build a sense of ownership to local communities that not only contributes to engagement during the period of the project but also beyond the project's life.
110. **Need to address land tenure complexities at the time of project design.** A key issue the PAD failed to identify is the sensitivity of land ownership in Jordan. This to some extent delayed project implementation, since for instance in Shoubak, Bedouin herders who have claims on tribal land which adjoin the proposed national protected area feared that designation of the PA would restrict their access to those lands or that they might lose the economic opportunity ascribed to those lands. A detailed analysis of land tenure of the potential protected areas during project design, could have provided valuable insights on the socio-political complexities on the ground, and may have been a warning on the need to go the extra mile in gaining the trust of local communities before engaging in the establishment of PAs.
111. **Setting-up a results-oriented M&E system that serve as a dynamic management tool, with precise objective and indicators that adequately reflect results achieved on the ground.** The results framework could have been adjusted with a formal restructuring to ensure it adequately

reflects results achieved on the ground and ensure the integration of socio-economic indicators that adequately reflect project performance and changes in country conditions and sectoral context. Moreover, considering the social and economic objectives of the project, indicators should be included to measure the economic activity/ improvements on wellbeing in the project areas, or in any case the number of project beneficiaries. Furthermore, it could be pertinent in projects using the IEM, to select a number of indicators that can be monitored by community representatives to create a feedback from beneficiaries to the decision makers. Finally, given the delays in the completion of project baseline measurements which did not occur until the MTR, defining project baselines prior to project implementation could facilitate data collection and M&E design.

112. **Ensure alignment of the GEO and the PDO.** The GEO tends to have sweeping objectives which envision global impacts from localized activities. In the case of this project, the GEO described the higher level objectives that could be achieved in the longer term (requiring longer time frame than the six years period of this project). The project rather puts in place a set of important accomplishments (capacity building, awareness raising, management plans, ecological knowledge, etc.) and partnerships which set the ground towards that longer term objective. The PDO defined more realistic and grounded project objectives. Future efforts should work towards ensuring the PDO and GEO are complimentary, since achieving both can be difficult to deliver.
113. **The qualifications of the project teams and their adequate staffing and presence on the ground, as well as their close and regular contact with beneficiaries promote confidence and credibility of the project and its institutions.** RSCN presence on the field, and holding regular consultation was a cornerstone of the project success and proved critical to gain communities trust and support. Moreover, the importance of having a competent and motivated Project Manager in place was also instrumental in this project, while his leadership allowed efficient and timely decision making and key to fully deliver on project objectives as well as to ensure the GEF grant amounts are fully disbursed.
114. **Broader development patterns in and around the PAs and SCAs plans/projects may delay project implementation.** Development patterns in and around the PAs and SCAs delayed project implementation. This was the case for instance with the feasibility studies related to the Red Sea – Dead Sea Water Conveyance Study, funded by the Bank, which delayed the designation of Qatar and Fifa PA.
115. **The project demonstrated that a conjunction of mechanisms and initiatives tailored to the local conditions and context specific demands is needed to engage communities in conservation management.** The project effectively combined decentralized, participatory governance mechanisms, private sector participation, stakeholder education and training, as well as dissemination of results and tailored management plans and the identification of economic opportunities through participatory processes and in accordance to the natural environment.

7. Comments on Issues Raised by Borrower/Implementing Agencies/Partners

(a) Borrower/implementing agencies

The Borrower's ICR is presented in **Annex 6**. It is well prepared, presents the story line in a concise and clear manner, and is included as received from the Borrower - with no modifications. The Borrower ICR story line is consistent with this ICR.

The final version of the Jordan IEM ICR report was shared electronically with the RSCN for comment. In email dated January 9, 2014, Mr. Yehya Khaled, Director General of RSCN, noted that he reviewed the report and discussed its contents with Mr. Tarek Abul Hawa (former director of the Jordan IEM Project PMU), and they both agreed that the report is comprehensive and they do not have comments on it.

(b) Cofinanciers

There were no formal cofinanciers within this project.

(c) Other partners and stakeholders

No comments were received.

Annex 1. Project Costs and Financing

(a) Project Cost by Component (in USD Million equivalent)

Components	Appraisal Estimate (USD millions)	Actual/Latest Estimate (USD millions)	Percentage of Appraisal
Component 1: Assessment and Planning for Integrated Ecosystem Management	0.61	0.67	110%
Component 2: Development of a network of biodiversity conservation sites.	4.09	2.88	70%
Component 3: Integrated Assessments of Climate Change Impacts on Biodiversity Conservation	0.42	0.40	97%
Component 4: Development of Sustainable Financing Mechanisms	0.00	0.00	-
Component 5: Project management, coordination, monitoring and evaluation.	1.00	1.06	115%
Incremental operating costs	1.02	1.02	100%
Total Baseline Cost	6.15	6.15	100%
Physical Contingencies	0.00		
Price Contingencies	0.00		
Total Project Costs			
Project Preparation Facility (PPF)	0.00		
Front-end fee IBRD	0.00		
Total Financing Required	6.15	6.15	100%

(b) Financing

Source of Funds	Appraisal Estimate (USD millions)	Actual/Latest Estimate (USD millions)	Percentage of Appraisal
Borrower (reported by borrower)	2.25	3.50	155%
Global Environment Facility (GEF)	6.15	6.15	100%

Annex 2. Outputs by Component

Component 1 – Assessment and Planning for Integrated Ecosystem Management.

1. The majority of activities falling under this component have been completed. The only output that is yet to be finalized is the adoption of the land use guidelines for the protected areas by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MOMA) and for the instructions on SCAs by the MOE.
2. *Baseline studies and economic assessments.* RSCN conducted all baseline studies and ecological, social and economic assessments for designated PAs and SCAs, including for the originally selected sites which ended up not being designated (e.g. Shoubak and Jabal Masuda). These assessments formed the basis for site management and designation, and were used to shape the management plans of the PAs and SCAs.
3. *Land use guidelines and maps.* Under this component land use guidelines and maps were prepared and incorporated into the Jordan Rift Valley Master Plan of the JVA, and into the Master Plans of the regional bodies designated following the decentralization of authority, including the Jordan Dead Sea Company, the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Area (ASEZA) and Petra Special Economic Area (PTSEA).
4. *Awareness and capacity building programs.* A Training Needs Assessment (TNA) was carried out for project staff and stakeholders. Using process-oriented learning methodology training was provided to all relevant project staff and stakeholders on sites. The main themes covered included: environmental education, ecology, conservation & law enforcement, local community development, protected area management and ecotourism.
5. *Other contributions.* Under this component contributions which were not originally planned but eligible under the Grant, included: (i) the full integration of the Land Use Unit established as part of the IEM project into the RSCN organizational chart; (ii) the conception of an Ecological Sensitive Map Area to be used by the JVA and the MOMA to inform land use planning outside PAs; and (iii) land use guidelines on wind energy project.

No.	Activity	Status at Project Completion	Overall progress percentage
	<i>Output 1.1: Ecological, social and economic assessments for protected areas (PAs) and special conservation areas (SCAs) completed as a basis for site designations, land use planning and management systems</i>		
1:1:1	Carry out ecological, social and economic assessments in the selected PAs and SCAs	Ecological assessments including all baseline data/analysis of flora and fauna, socio-economic analysis and assessments of all sites were carried out for all PAs and SCAs. A socio-economic assessment was completed for Shoubak as well.	100%
1:1:2	Define preliminary boundaries for PA and SCA based on baseline assessments	The boundaries of the proposed PAs and SCAs were defined and the GIS Unit updated all the boundaries.	100%
1:1:3	Economic valuation studies of protected areas	Economic valuation studies of protected areas carried out.	100%
	<i>Output 1.2 Boundaries of PAs and SCAs finalized with stakeholders and mapped</i>		
1:2:1	Set and finalize boundaries of PAs and SCAs in collaboration with relevant stakeholders	The boundaries of the 4 PAs (incl. Shoubak) and SCAs were defined and finalized	100%
1:2:2	Complete set of maps for	Maps illustrating the borders and geographic of	100%

	PAs and SCAs	the PAs and SCAs were produced	
1:2:3	Carry out an institutional, stakeholders and legal review	The institutional and legal review expert assessed all the key parties and organizations that have legal jurisdiction in the JRV, and assessed their respective mandates and land use plans.	100 %
<i>Output 1.3 Existing land use planning maps updated to reflect final boundaries of PAs and SCAs</i>			
1:3:1	Present the suggested maps to the JVA	The finalized maps of the PAs and SCAs were compiled and presented to the JVA.	100 %
1:3:2	Integrate finalized maps into JVA's LUP maps of the JRV	The finalized maps were presented to the JVA. In parallel to the institutional and legal review exercise, they were integrated into the land use plans of the other involved institutions.	80%
1:3:3	Follow up with JVA to attain the formal approval on the new plan by the Cabinet	Individual PAs and SCAs were approved and incorporated by JVA and Cabinet	100%
<i>Output 1.4 Land use guidelines and enforcement procedures developed to secure and maintain IEM approaches in PAs and SCAs</i>			
1:4:1	Prepare the guidelines for land use in consultation with relevant stakeholders	The final draft of the guidelines was completed by the land use Expert	100%
1:4:2	Seek JVA and relevant stakeholders approval on the suggested guidelines	Land use guidelines at approval stage with MOMA, SCAs guidelines at approval stage with MOE.	80%
<i>Output 1.5 Land use guidelines and enforcement procedures incorporated into the planning process of the JVA and implemented in the field</i>			
1:5:1	Include approved land-use guidelines into JVA planning process	The final draft of the guidelines was completed and incorporated into the JVAs planning process	100%
1:5:2	Enforce the new guidelines within the PAs and SCAs	See above	80%
1:5:3	Land use planning around sites	See above	80%
<i>Output 1.6 Awareness and capacity building programs implemented for key stakeholders to enable them to support and / or implement the new planning guidelines</i>			
1:6:1	Evaluate capacity and level of awareness for relevant stakeholders	Completed	100 %
1:6:2	Conduct a capacity building program based on the evaluation	Completed	100 %
1:6:3	Implement the awareness strategy and the capacity building program by RSCN, JVA and environmental police	Several initiatives have been taken by the project which offer capacity and awareness building programs to the key partners and institutions	100%
1:6:4	Carry out TNA for stakeholders	A training needs analysis was carried out for stakeholders throughout project sites	100%
1:6:5	Provide training needed for stakeholders	A new training program was developed and implemented. Mentoring and coaching methodology included a series of workshops to follow up on the trainees for 6 months.	100%
<i>Output 1.7 National protected area policies developed, adopted and published through the Ministry of Environment</i>			

1:7:1	Prepare national policies in coordination with MOE and guidance from IUCN	The national protected areas policy was prepared and submitted to the MOE. However, the level of support to this policy was minimal.	100 %
1:7:2	Seek adoption of the new policies from the Cabinet	A new initiative was taken on by the project beyond its original scope to review and adopt a new bylaw for nature conservation	100%

Component 2 – Development of a network of biodiversity conservation sites, embodying the principles of integrated ecosystem management.

6. *Protected Areas.* To date, a network of three PAs (Fifa, Yarmouk, and Qatar PAs) out of the four originally envisaged were legally established. Shoubak PA, which was originally chosen as an alternative site for Jabal Masuda PA, was not designated due to continued reluctance of local communities. The designation file for the Shoubak PA was transferred to the RSCN to continue to implement post GEF-project intervention (with donor support). In the case of Qatar PA, it must be noted that although the site was legally established, the PA is not fully operational due to remaining tensions with the local communities.
7. *Special Conservation Areas.* With regards to the designation of SCAs, to date 10 SCAs were designated out of the 7 originally planned, and conservation plans were prepared. Moreover, the Mission was informed by the MOE, that requests for the establishment of 6 additional SCAs were received.
8. *Management Plans.* The Management Plans for all three PAs were prepared and approved, and an interim management plan for Shoubak PA was prepared. All legally designated SCAs also have their respective management plans in place.
9. *Infrastructure and construction works.* The buildings for the sites' management units were constructed. The Mission had the opportunity to visit construction works which were underway in Yarmouk and Fifa PAs, and in Aqaba Bird Observatory and Wadi Bin Hammad SCA (in June 2013).
10. *Eco-tourism and other socio-economic enterprises developed within and around the protected areas.* All sites identified as eligible for ecotourism had a marketing strategy developed, and some sites had ecotourism facilities. Moreover, other economic enterprises in place included: soap, mushrooms, shops and restaurants shops in visitor center/management units.
11. *Other contributions.* A sub-component on knowledge management (KM) activities eligible under the Grant was further developed to the project design in the last year. Products developed included: (1) fact sheets (climate change, land use, community based organizations and Aqaba Bird Observatory); three case studies (a new paradigm for PAs, IEM, and community based organizations); leaflets and posters for each site and program; a Jordan Valley "coffee table" book to be sold by Wild Jordan; and videos. Moreover a RSCN-wide knowledge mapping exercise was carried out, to ensure sustainability of KM activities associated with the GEF project.

No.	Activity	Status at Project Completion	Overall progress percentage
	<i>Output 2.1 Four new protected areas legally designated, with staff teams, essential infrastructure and IEM-centered management plans in place and operational</i>		
2:1:1	Prepare separate files for each PA and submit to MOE	The Designation file of all the proposed were submitted	100%
2:1:2	Seek formal approval for 4 PAs from the Cabinet	3 out of the 4 PAs were officially designated, it was agreed upon that RSCN will oversee the designation process of Shoubak PA with the Cabinet	75%
2:1:3	Update maps of land-use management plans with the newly established PAs	Completed	100%

2:1:4	Prepare interim management plans for the 4 PAs seeking the MOE and public approval	The management plans of all the proposed protected areas were prepared and submitted	100%
2:1:5	Prepare management plans for the 4 PAs seeking the MOE and public approval	The management plans for Fifa and Yarmouk PAs were finalized, and an interim management plan for Shoubak Was prepared	100%
2:1:6	Recruit all relevant staff of each site	Staff was hired in a timely manner	100%
2:1:7	Carry out TNA for staff	A training needs analysis was carried out for all staff of the proposed PAs and SCAs	100%
2:1:8	Provide training needed for staff	Training was carried out in an ongoing manner throughout the project implementation period.	100%
2:1:9	Identify and construct the required infrastructure for each site	The construction works in Fifa, Yarmouk and Wadi Bin Hammad were completed	100%
2:1:10	Knowledge and management tools material	Several KM products, including brochures, posters and fact sheets.	100%
2:1:11	Infrastructure design and supervision	Construction of the infrastructure was completed in the designated sites and was supervised by the Architectural Design specialist	100%
<i>Output 2.2 Eco-tourism and other socio-economic enterprises developed within and around the protected areas</i>			
2:2:1	Prepare comprehensive ecotourism plans that comply with management and zoning plans	The marketing and ecotourism specialist completed marketing plans for Yarmouk, ABO and Shoubak	100%
2:2:2	Define staff and infrastructure needed	Delivered as part of 2.2.1	100%
2:2:3	Develop eco-tourism packages for PAs	Delivered as part of 2.2.1	100%
2:2:4	Establish socio-economic projects	Several socio-economic initiatives developed throughout the project	100%
2:2:5	Integrate socioeconomic projects with RSCNs marketing network	Integration of socio-economic projects with RSCN's marketing network took place in Shoubak, Yarmouk, and ABO, and, to a lesser extent, in Homret Maeen	100%
2:2:6	Prepare interpretation plan	All interpretation materials were delivered by the knowledge management program. Factsheets were being completed in Arabic and English for all PAs and SCAs.	100%
<i>Output 2.3 Seven SCAs designated on the land use master plan for the Jordan Rift Valley</i>			
2:3:1	Seek formal approval for the four SCAs from the Cabinet	After reviewing the sites' designation file, the MOE has officially designated Wadi Bin Hammad as an SCA	100%
2:3:2	Update land use management plans with the newly established SCAs	10 SCAs were officially designated with their respective management plans in place	100%
2:3:3	Prepare IEM plans for the 4 SCAs seeking MOE and public approval	The IEM plans for all SCAs were prepared	100%
2:3:4	Identify and construct the required infrastructure for each site	Construction of identified infrastructure completed	100%
<i>Output 2.4 Community-driven IEM plans developed for four SCAs, two contiguous with designated</i>			

	<i>protected areas and two 'stand-alone' sites</i>		
2:4:1	Define 4 priority SCAs according to set criteria	Completed, 10 SCAs identified.	250%
2:4:2	Prepare community driven IEM plans	Community driven IEM plans specific to site and community context were prepared.	100%
2:4:3	Implement community driven IEM plans	Work plans and budgets were implemented	100%
	<i>Output 2.5 Lessons learned from the application of the IEM approach documented, promoted and institutionalized in relevant agencies.</i>		
2:5:1	Establish and implement information management system	KM program was implemented	100%
2:5:2	Promote lessons learned from IEM approach	KM was completed and factsheets on lessons learned prepared	100%

Component 3: Integrated Assessments of Climate Change Impacts on Biodiversity Conservation in the Jordan Rift Valley Developed to Support Conservation Planning and Implementation.

12. Work on this component relied on collaboration with the Jordan Meteorology Department and the Ministry of Environment. This component aimed to climate proof the protected area network and to mainstream climate change considerations into the management plans. In order to do so, studies were first prepared on impact of climate change on vegetation, fire and run off and on selected indicators species from different PAs. The next step required the Project to consider how to integrate this information into their work. They carried out higher resolution models and chose 4 PAs (Yarmouk and Shuleh, Mujib, Dana, and Fifa) for further work, and adaptation plots were built. Furthermore, a report on local communities' adaptive capacity to climate change was prepared. For mainstreaming, the Project collaborated with the MOMA through the national exercise of land use analysis of the whole country. An important collaboration now with the preparation of the sensitivity map which will be used to influence land use approaches. Other element of influence is policy dialogue done through the guidelines and capacity building, to learn how to incorporate a decision support arrangements system to make better decisions on resource allocation and planning taking into consideration biodiversity.

No.	Activity	Status at Project Completion	Overall progress percentage
	<i>Output 3.1 Knowledge base documenting trends and impacts of climate change on key indicator species developed</i>		
3:1:1	Prepare preliminary maps of vegetation communities in all PAs an SCAs	Completed	100 %
3:1:2	Select key vegetation types and plant species that will be used in the assessments	Completed	100%
	<i>Output 3.2 Expected consequences of climate changes 'scenarios' on strategic ecosystems within the JRV assessed and documented</i>		
3:2:1	Carry out all research needed	Completed. Climate Change Adaptation pilot projects were set up in Dana Biosphere and Yarmouk PA	100 %
3:2:2	Produce the climate change impacts model	Completed. Presentations of the results of climate change impact model were presented	100 %
	<i>Output 3.3 Policy and management options to "climate proof" biodiversity conservation identified and developed</i>		

3:3:1	Identify management options	Completed	100%
<i>Output 3.4 Key measures incorporated into the conservation planning and management plans of PAs and SCAs in the JRV.</i>			
3:4:1	Integrate assessments and the climate change impact model into the plans of PAs and SCAs	The National Climate Change officer in collaboration with RSCN integrated the climate change models into the PA and SCA plans	100%
3:4:2	Implement pilot climate change adaptation measures in PAs	Climate Change Adaptation pilot projects in Dana and Yarmouk were completed	100%
<i>Output 3.5 Key measures in areas outside of PAs and SCAs disseminated to relevant entities.</i>			
3:5:1	Integrate assessments and the climate change impact model into the land-use approached in the Jordan Rift Valley	Completed. The RSCN climate change unit worked with the appointed land use expert in order to integrate the assessments into the land use guidelines	100%

Component 4: Sustainable Financing Mechanisms Strengthened.

13. The sustainable financing mechanisms relied on three pillars: increasing the RSCN endowment fund that would contribute towards the core operational expenses of the newly created PAs and SCAs; identifying business plans for the newly created PAs and SCAs, and private sector engagement to increase financing sustainability.
14. The RSCN assigned a higher committee that followed specifically on the endowment fund. A US\$2 million increase in endowment fund was secured through USAID. In addition, collaboration was fostered with the private sector, Housing Bank for Investment, with whom the RSCN managed fundraising. A number of income generating activities were identified in the business plans (one business plan prepared for Yarmouk PA and one for Homret Maeen SCA, the rest had tourism strategies whenever relevant (6). However, the plans relied on tourism (local and international) for income generation. Agreements with the private sector included for example: arrangement with Movenpick Hotel in Aqaba to advertise the ABO and provide shuttles for hotel guests to go there; work with the Dead Sea Company; and the agreements with local companies (soap, mushrooms). In addition, at the time of ICR report preparation discussions were underway on concessions for camp sites in Yarmouk and Wadi Bin Hammad.

No.	Activity	Status at Project Completion	Overall progress percentage
<i>Output 4.1 Fund-raising strategies developed and implemented to raise additional capital for RSCN's endowment fund</i>			
4:1:1	Assess RSCNs financing needs to define target	Completed	100%
4:1:2	Define potential donors	RSCN studied and defined potential donors for its fund raising portfolio	100%
4:1:3	Prepare fund raising strategy	RSCN prepared a fund raising strategy to be carried out throughout 2013	100%
4:1:4	Develop funding proposals	Collaboration was fostered with the private sector, housing bank for Investment, with whom they managed fundraising. RSCN approached USAID who provided the US\$ 2million for the endowment fund.	100%
<i>Output 4.2 Business plans and strategies prepared for the four new protected areas</i>			
4:2:1	Study running cost of each	Detailed costing and financial planning was	100%

	PA management expenditures	developed and was being integrated into RSCN core budget and planning	
4:2:2	Prepare business plans for each established PA	Model business plan developed for key sites. A business plan prepared for Yarmouk PA, Homret Maeen SCA, and the Aqaba Bird Observatory. Moreover 6 sites had tourism strategies whenever relevant. Fifa did not have business plan because it was not relevant in this site.	100%
<i>Output 4.3 Eco-tourism and other socio-economic products fully integrated into Wild Jordan's marketing network</i>			
4:3:1	Pre-launch campaign for all new eco-tourism and socio-economic products	Completed for Shoubak, Yarmouk, ABO, and Homret Maeen	100%
4:3:2	Launch new products	As part of the socio-economic strategy, members of the local communities were provided the opportunity and backing to produce and sell their products; however these products were not yet integrated into Wild Jordan's marketing at the time of ICR mission.	70%
4:3:3	Update marketing materials to include new products	A new marketing outlet was developed at the Queen Alia International airport. Marketing materials for all potential sites were prepared by the KM team.	80%
4:3:4	Develop new shops in new eco-tourism sites	Completed in Yarmouk, Shoubak, Homret Maeen, and ABO, to be run by Wild Jordan	70%
<i>Output 4.4 Private sectors engaged in supporting investment, management and marketing of eco-tourism and other nature-related businesses.</i>			
4:4:1	Define potential sites and programs for partnership	Wild Jordan partnership with RSCN. Other partnerships identified include : (i) Movenpick arrangement in Aqaba Bird Observatory to send tourists, (ii) MOU with Dead Sea Company arrangement, (iii) agreements with local companies (soap, mushrooms), (iv) concessions for camp sites in Yarmouk and Khayyuf, Wadi Bin Hammad	60%
4:4:2	Select partners for sites and programs	Wild Jordan partnership with RSCN. Same as above.	60%
<i>Output 4.5 Co-financing resources raised and committed to support ongoing project activities</i>			
4:5:1	Prepare and implement co-financing plan	Co-financing reports were prepared twice year	100%
4:5:2	Monitor development and financial status of programs	Ongoing monitoring	100%

Component 5: Project Management, Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation.

15. The project underwent a number of staff rotations that impacted the progress of the project over the implementation of the project (including changes in project management, lack of safeguard specialist since 2011). A number of functions were integrated into the RSCN, including the climate change unit, land use unit, and community development function. As part of the project, 12 project steering committee meetings were held, and minutes and summary of meetings were drafted. Participants were not requested to sign on minutes, which according to some of the participants weakened the implementation of the project steering committee meetings' recommendations, particularly when follow up was required by some of the agencies attending the meeting. Monitoring and evaluation tables were adjusted periodically to allow better fit.

No.	Activity	Status at Project Completion	Overall progress percentage
<i>Output 5.1 Fully operational PMU</i>			
5:1:1	Prepare TOR according to the agreed structure	Completed	100 %
5:1:2	Hire the staff required	PMU was fully staffed.	100%
5:1:3	Prepare the infrastructure and needed equipment	Completed	100%
5:1:4	Hire technical project implementation specialist	Incorporated into TOR of procurement specialist	100%
<i>Output 5.2 Established Steering Committee and periodic meetings maintained</i>			
5:2:1	Establish the steering committee	Completed. 12 Steering Committee meetings were held	100%
5:2:2	Review the project development	Completed	100%
<i>Output 5.3 Monitoring and evaluation program effectively implemented.</i>			
5:3:1	Establish a monitoring system	Completed	100%
5:3:2	Apply the monitoring system	Ongoing throughout project life	100%

Annex 3. Economic and Financial Analysis

16. **Not applicable.** The Project was a stand-alone GEF project with a GEF grant and counterpart funding from partner government agencies and non-governmental organizations. At the time the Project was designed, neither financial nor economic analyses were prepared. No standard cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness parameters were calculated; these would be very difficult to calculate ex-post.

Annex 4. Bank Lending and Implementation Support/Supervision Processes

(a) Task Team members

Name	Title	Unit	Responsibility
Lending			
Stefanie Brackmann	Consultant	AFTEN	
Antonio J. Cittati	Consultant	AFTPC	
Nicole Glineur	Sr Environmental Spec.	GEF	
Josephine G. Salang	Senior Program Assistant	MNSSD	
Ulrich K. H. M. Schmitt	Sr Natural Resources Econ.	EASER	
Supervision/ICR			
Hyacinth D. Brown	Senior Finance Officer	CTRFC	
Diana C. El Masri	Consultant	MNAFM	
Lina Fares	Procurement Specialist	MNAPR	
Badr Kamel	Senior Procurement Specialist	MNAPR	
Dahlia Lotayef	Sr Environmental Spec.	MNSEN	
Jad Raji Mazahreh	Financial Management Specialist	MNAFM	
Kenneth K. Mwenda	Sr Counsel	LEGEM	
Dahlia Lotayef	Lead Environmental Specialist	AFTN2	TTL at design
Kanta Rigaud	Lead Environmental Specialist	CPFPT	TTL
John Fraser Stewart	Sr Natural Resource Mgmt Specialist	CPFIA	
Banu Setlur	Sr Environmental Specialist	MNSEE	
Knut Opal	Lead Social Development Specialist	GEFNR	
Concepcion Del Castillo	Consultant	MNSWA	
Lia Carol Sieghart	Senior Environmental Specialist	MNSEE	
Ghada Abdel Shakour	Consultant	MNSHD	
Knut Opsal	Sr Social Scientist	MNSSO	
Tracy Hart	Sr Environment Specialist	MNSEE	TTL
Helena Naber	Environment Specialist	MNSEE	ICR TTL
Melanie Argimon	Junior Professional Associate	MNSEE	ICR Author

(b) Staff Time and Cost

FY	Labor	Travel	Other	Total
2004	9,829.64	2,528.20	45.29	12,403.13
2005	15,706.82	3,467.66	27.24	19,201.72
2006	17,996.77	2,386.95	19,926.46	40,310.18
2007	128,716.25	25,080.56	11,200.43	164,997.24
2008	18,575.55	5,909.39	78.44	24,563.38
2009	13,920.43	11,185.58	2,823.55	27,929.56
2010	24,941.10	12,909.72	174.75	38,025.57
2011	57,100.12	44,644.19	559.18	102,303.49*
2012	36,379.08	16,021.88	5,175.05	57,576.01
2013	64,355.41	41,426.63	225.8	106,007.84
2014	3,238.40	137	0	3,375.40

* Due to the project's designation as problem project, it was allocated an additional US\$40,000 (approximately). The additional fund was used for more intensive implementation support.

Annex 5. Targets of Vegetation Cover Achieved by the Project

Proposed PA	Vegetation Type	Current Cover of Vegetation Type in Established PA (%)	Target Increase in Cover of Vegetation Type after Establishment of new PAs (%)	Representation of vegetation cover with JRV Reserve (%)
Yarmouk	Deciduous oak	0	3.65	3.65
	Mediterranean non-forest	2.14	0.1	2.22
	Water vegetation	5.34	0.12	5.46
	Pine forest	9.6	0.2	9.78
Fifa	Saline	0.99	1.73	2.72
	Tropical	10.84	1.4	12.25
Qatar	Mudflat	1.4	3.2	4.6
	Saline	0.99	1.33	2.32
	Sand dune	35.54	2.98	38.52
Shoubak	Juniper	0.78	5.54	6.32
	Steppe	2.18	0.41	2.59
	Water vegetation	5.34	0.28	5.62
	Acacia and Rocky sudanian	4.09	0.79	4.88

Source: Jordan IEM Project.

Annex 6. Borrower's ICR

Prepared by:

Tarek Abul Hawa
IEM JO Project Director (2007-2008, 2010-2013)
The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature
November 2013

Basic Information

Country:	Jordan	Project Name:	Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Jordan Rift Valley GEF
Project ID:	P075534	L/C/TF Number(s):	TF-90462
ICR Date:	04/23/2013	ICR Type:	Core ICR
Lending Instrument:	SIL	Borrower:	THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN
Original Commitment:	Total USD 6.15M	Disbursed Amount:	USD 6.15M
Revised Amount:	USD 6.15M		
Environmental Category: B		Global Focal Area: B	
Implementing Agencies:			
Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN)			
Co-financiers and Other External Partners:			

Key Dates

Process	Date	Process	Original Date	Revised / Actual Date(s)
Concept Review:	04/08/2004	Effectiveness:	09/19/2007	09/19/2007
Appraisal:	11/07/2006	Restructuring(s):		
Approval:	06/12/2007	Mid-term Review:	07/15/2010	
		Closing:	07/14/2013	07/14/2013

1) Project design

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

The project idea was conceived in the beginning of 2004, however, its date of effectiveness was not before mid-2007. The overall project goal was to further mainstream the conservation of biodiversity using the ecosystems approach into the land-use planning and management frameworks across the Rift Valley. Upon the project effectiveness date, several components of the project were in need for review as they had changed during the course of the project preparation phase driven by the rapid changes in legal, economic and institutional frameworks in Jordan. This included some of the project specific outputs (e.g. change in project stakeholders' and project activity pricing such as construction of facilities).

The project design and preparation period was very long mainly due to donor's bureaucracy and

procedures, causing a significant shortcoming to respond to the accelerating change in the project implementation environment.

This shortcoming included some very critical changes in the governance, institutional and legal set up of the Jordan Rift Valley as a result of major decisions taken by the government on the privatization program and the emergence of key independent agencies governing major components of the project intervention area.

During the first three years of the project the WB TTL was well informed of such dramatic changes and pressing challenges, however, no actions were proposed in response, including project restructuring. Attempts by the second TTL and RSCN in year four to introduce such restructuring were rejected by the World Bank management, justified by stating that project restructuring will only need to take place six months before its termination. A full proposal for restructuring by the project team was put together upon the project midterm, however, was fully wasted as a result of the World Bank rejection (please see project midterm reports). By year two of the project, JVA was no longer the main agency responsible for land-use planning and management across the Rift Valley, and several other special economic zones were introduced such as; the economic zones commission, the Petra Development and Tourism Regional Authority (PDTRA), and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MOMA) master plan program. RSCN had to work and negotiate with several new agencies on the same components agreed with JVA upon the project design, and each of these had its own development agenda associated with little sense of obligation towards the project implementation.

A second major event which influenced the project design was the Global economic crisis which started to affect Jordan and the project in 2009. The exponential increase in prices of goods, works and services caused a serious problem for the project delivery as per the designed components.

The third and most influential development affecting the overall project delivery, and in particular in regard to component two addressing protected areas, was the socio-political instability described by the Arab Spring. The capability of the government and RSCN to negotiate the establishment of new protected areas declined severely as the country was facing much bigger challenges and priorities (in their view) than protected areas and biodiversity conservation. This caused total paralysis in component two for over two years which required a much more structured response from the World Bank in calling for and/or accepting a project restructuring exercise.

There was a real need to revisit the project design on the outcome and components level right after the first year (late 2008) and upon mid-term (late 2010) of its implementation. Because this did not take place, the project continued with a serious design shortcoming, leading to serious implementation impediments.

2) Project implementation modality

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

Arrangements for project implementation had serious weaknesses by design. The project was governed by a steering committee chaired by the Ministry of Environment and comprising members from initially seven more agencies representing the key partners involved in the project implementation upon its inception.

Due to institutional changes which took place in the governance framework for the Rift Valley, RSCN proposed and adopted a restructuring of the steering committee to include all the new organizations who had become key stakeholders for the project. This included PDTRA, DZC, MOMA and others.

The changes in the legal frameworks of the Rift Valley significantly reduced MOE's ability to effectively lead the steering committee. By year three of the project, there was a real need to visit the institutional arrangements for the project with the aim to reconfirm the commitment and active involvement in its

implementation and support. This was an action also proposed by the project PMU to the World Bank upon mid-term.

On the other hand, the mandate of the steering committee was never obligatory to all its members by design, it was merely a technical communication group/platform with little decision making powers. The majority of the members of the committee were of technical capacity and always avoided making commitments on behalf of their respective agencies.

Upon inception, the project was managed by a director who reported to the Director of Conservation at RSCN, thus allowing limited space for decision making and effective communication with stakeholders and project partners. A change to this was made by RSCN starting from year four of the project, where the Director was in direct line of reporting with RSCN DG. This paved the way for significant improvement in project delivery pace and ability to be adaptive and responsive in management. Nonetheless, this arrangement was still not effective enough when it came to the implementation of the SSS contracts assigned to RSCN in the project design. The PMU was essentially contracting its employer for such contracts. A rather superficial modality/solution was introduced to mitigate such issues by asking the MOE to sign the SSS contracts on behalf of the project with RSCN. This malfunctioning remedy caused serious problems for the PMU in the monitoring and control of the contracts, and in one case led to the early termination of the large 250 K socio-economic contract with Wild Jordan, thus leading to serious internal issues for the PMU relationship with key RSCN departments. The PMU ended up directly managing the contract activities/budget which led to an overload of its administrative and technical capacities.

3) Project global environment objective and development objective

Rating: Satisfactory

The project was designed to contribute to safeguarding the ecological integrity of the Rift Valley primarily through the application of the principles of integrated ecosystem management into the master plan of the Jordan Rift Valley along with the establishment of a new approach and network of protected areas. The project was meant to achieve the above through four main components: influencing the JVA (and later on other agencies) master plan(s), establishing a new approach and set of protected areas including the innovative SCA concept, initiating a biodiversity oriented climate change research and assessments, and adopting a creative approach to financial sustainability mainly through endowment funds.

RSCN notes that the project was also misperceived or misunderstood to be a typical/conventional protected areas project which allowed for a significant shortfall in assessing its achievement/progress and providing sound advice by key partners of the project.

It is RSCN's view that the project went above and beyond its initial intended scope by:

1. Mainstreaming the ecosystem approach and biodiversity conservation into the land use planning frameworks, processes and plans of five national and regional agencies (DZC, PDTRA, MOMA, ASEZA, and JVA) rather than just one (JVA) upon inception.
2. Establishing thirteen new protected areas including three conventional ones and ten SCAs which represent – in the author's view – the new effective approach to PA establishment and sustainability for Jordan.
3. Developing the biodiversity oriented climate change program in RSCN and nationally. Initially only intended to undertake baseline assessment for climate change and biodiversity, the project was able to go all the way to institutionalizing the climate change program nationally with the Department of Meteorology and within RSCN with

- the new climate change program imbedded in its new structure as part of the transformation strategy.
4. Securing the intended additional capital needed for the financial sustainability of the new programs introduced and enhanced and developing the business planning capacity of RSCN.

The project was able to deliver fully on its intended scope within the time and cost identified in its design.

4) Project Outcomes

Project outcome 1: Land-use planning

Rating: Satisfactory

The key deliverables under this component were the baseline assessments, the development and adoption of the land use guidelines, the development and adoption of the protected areas policies and the awareness raising of all key stakeholders involved in the land use planning and management.

The project successfully achieved the baselines assessments (ecological and socio economic) for five conventional protected areas (Yarmouk, Fifa, Masuda, Qatar and Shoubak) and eleven SCAs (Al Shuleh, Tal Al Arbaeen, Birket Al-Arayes, Ma'awa, Swaimah Park and Homret Maeen, Khayyounf, Wadi Bin Hammad, Rahmah, Hima Layathneh, and ABO) originally intended for four protected areas and seven SCAs.

The project developed and adopted three biodiversity oriented land use guidelines with MOMA, MOE, DZC.

The project implemented a comprehensive awareness raising program for all project stakeholders twice - upon inception and midterm- rather than once as per the project design, in response to the changing institutional frameworks.

The project successfully supported the development and adoption of the protected areas bylaw and the SCA regulations by the MOE.

Project outcome 2: Protected areas

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

The main deliverables under this component were the establishment and operationalization of four conventional protected areas and the designation and operationalization of the seven and four SCAs respectively, the development of a set of socio economic initiatives for local communities including ecotourism and the documentation of lessons learned.

The project successfully designed three conventional protected areas and was able to operationalize two. As an adaptive alternative to the shortcomings in the protected areas, the SCA concept and application was expanded to introduce a very innovative alternative to centrally managed protected areas toward a more community based and private sector based protected areas management model. RSCN perceives this to be one of the project's key innovative contributions advising the future of the national protected areas program.

A set of socio economic activities and initiatives were developed for each protected area, often using creative ideas never used before by RSCN or nationally (e.g. the first highway rest-house, the commercial outlets in CBOs management stations), in addition to the expansion on the conventional models of

ecotourism, sustainable agriculture and handicrafts.

A comprehensive knowledge management system was developed and over 50 knowledge products were delivered (e.g. case studies, infographic presentations, short films, powerpoint presentations, brochures, posters, fact sheets and a picture book).

Project outcome 3: Climate change

Rating: Highly Satisfactory

The main deliverables under this component were to establish a knowledge base on climate change impacts on key biodiversity elements, the development of expected future scenarios, the identification of policy and management options incorporated into PAs and SCAs planning and management and the dissemination of the assessment results.

The project was fully successful in achieving all intended outputs and even went a long way further in the development of technical and institutional frameworks on climate change and biodiversity. This comprises; the establishment of the stand-alone climate change and biodiversity unit at RSCN as part of its core function identified and adopted in the new transformation strategy, the development of a national platform for communication and coordination of climate change and biodiversity with the JMD and MOE, the development of a set of adaptation strategies within and outside protected areas, the implementation of a series of pilot adaption projects in select sites, and the development of a long term program development strategy with a set of new project concepts and proposals.

Project outcome 4: Sustainable financing

Rating: Satisfactory

The main deliverables under this component include the increase of the endowment fund capital by two million USD, the development of site based business plans, the implementation of a set of socio economic initiatives for local communities including ecotourism, and the assurance of adequate co-financing by project partners.

The project successfully achieved the two million USD addition to the endowment fund, prepared two pilot business plans for one PA and one SCA and developed four strategic business development plans for four more areas (2 PAs and 2 SCAs).

The project was able to incorporate the new units and programs into the RSCN strategic business planning process, and they became part of RSCN's annual financial planning exercise.

The project co-financing achieved its intended targets with some agencies co-financing reduced and other increased. See the co-financing table.

This component –along with component two– was faced with the challenges related to the national and global financial crisis from 2008 onwards, with government direct financial support nearly vanishing. Further, from 2011 onwards, political instability led to a severe decline in tourism numbers to PAs and SCAs.

Project outcome 5: Project management

Rating: Highly Satisfactory

The PMU was fully established during the first quarter of the project. It included the project director, the procurement specialist, the accounting officer and the M&E specialist.

The first year of the project represented a very good start with focus given to baseline surveys and initial detailed assessment and launch of project interventions. At the end of year one, the project director resigned and it took RSCN over a year to find a replacement. During this period very little progress was

made on project outcomes as well as spending. This situation continued through year three despite the recruitment of a new project director who only stayed in position for eight months, leading to listing the project on the 'problem projects list' during the PPR which took place in 2011.

The project director position was filled once again in year four, this time till the end of the project duration.

- The performance of the PMU was highly affected by a set of internal and external challenges:
 1. The high turnover rate of the project director position.
 2. The decline in government political and financial support hindered by global and national constraints, especially in regard to PA designation and program financing.
 3. The inability of RSCN's board of directors to provide needed support on the PAs designation files due to national political and economic constraints.

The high level of bureaucracy of the World Bank procedures and often limited level of responsiveness especially in regard to procurement and financial management.

5) World Bank Performance

The project had two TTLs, two procurement specialists, two financial management specialists, and one safeguard specialist (for the first three years only).

The first TTL reported that the project was of satisfactory and moderately satisfactory performance until quarter four of 2010. The project was then moved into the moderately unsatisfactory category for one year which led to listing the project on the problem projects list. It is important to note that the change from satisfactory to unsatisfactory coincided with the change of the project TTL, even though the project was mal performing for at least one full year before. An earlier detection/recognition of the project's weak performance could have been very useful to avoid falling into the problem list.

With the new TTL assigned to the project (along with the filling of the project director position), the project witnessed rapid improvement in performance which was concluded with a full on time delivery of all project technical components and financial proceedings in July 2013.

Upon project midterm in early 2011, RSCN requested a project restructuring in response to the cumulative effects of the external environment factors described earlier. The project TTL was supportive of the proposition, however, the proposal was declined by the Bank's management with the justification that the restructuring will only need to be triggered six months before the project termination. A more constructive response from the Bank would have resulted in better achievement of project technical components quality as well as financial and institutional sustainability.

One year before the project termination date, RSCN, with support from the TTL, put together a full project restructuring proposal, a process which took three months of concerted efforts by the PMU. The proposal included a one year zero additional cost extension to assure project activities quality, foster institutional anchorage and improve potential for sustainability. RSCN was astonished to receive the World Bank rejection of the restructuring proposal only four months before its termination date. The project PMU was faced with the challenges of finalizing around 10% the project interventions and 30% of project budget in four months.

It was mainly due to the support of the project TTL that the PMU was able to adopt a four months emergency plan to deliver on all remaining project activities and unspent funds. This took place despite the bureaucratic constraints put forth by the procurement specialist and significant delays from the financial disbursement department.

6) Government Support

The government of Jordan was supportive of the project during its inception phase. The steering committee – although with limited decision making powers – provided all possible support and expressed full understanding of project challenges.

The support of the government declined severely after the 2008 economic crisis, and reached its lowest peak upon the start of the Arab spring which limited its ability to push forth some of the project components (i.e. the PAs designation).

The government of Jordan was very supportive of the proposal for the project restructuring and extension but was highly surprised and discontent at the Banks unresponsiveness to the request.

7) RSCN Performance

RSCN executed the project stemming from its long established experience in large GEF projects implementation. The PMU was delegated to oversee the project delivery and all possible political, technical and administrative support was made available.

RSCN suffered the most from the 2008 and 2011 external constraints which crippled its capacity to achieve the new PAs designations. It was obvious to RSCN – in the view of the author – that the time for smooth PA designation (particularly in the Rift Valley) had passed. It is well recognized by RSCN today that all new protected areas and land tenure related activities will need a much more thorough preparation phase which could or could not lead to successful PA designation. This notion is well accepted by RSCN as it complies with its established approach to participative planning and management.

RSCN took several important decisions to ensure the financial and institutional sustainability of the interventions. This was done through the successful enlargement of the endowment fund, the institutionalization of the land use, climate change and community development units within its core business and the incorporation of all the new activities within its annual business and financial planning.

8) Project Procurement

Rating: Highly Satisfactory

The project procurement specialist was there for its full duration. The procurement plan of the project was fully met with all its anticipated targets and was continuously rated by the project director and the World Bank team as satisfactory. Please see ISRs and final procurement plan report.

The procurement process during the last three years of the project was a typical emergency process which peaked during the last six months and achieved (with quality performance) the spending of around 80% of project funds.

9) Project M&E

Rating: Satisfactory

Two M&E specialists were recruited for the project. The first covered year one through three while the second was in position until the project termination.

The M&E system was well delivered by the project team with support from the TTLs. However, the system suffered from the unclear mandate, limited supervision by the steering committee and the time and efforts wasted in preparation for the project restructuring.

The project had a safeguard specialist who was underperforming and consequently dismissed/resigned.

Two full-cycle attempts to recruit a new safeguard specialist failed due to lack of competent candidates.

10) Project spending

Rating: Highly Satisfactory

The project ended year one with around 15% spending of its allocated funds. Year two and three witnessed severe decline in project spending (see previous notes). By year four, the project was identified as a problem project with only around 20% of funds disbursed and around 60% of project time elapsed.

Starting from year four, the project spending performance improved dramatically resulting in full disbursement of all project funds by termination date.

Annex 7. List of Supporting Documents

World Bank Documents:

- Project Appraisal Document
- Aide-Memoires
- ISRs
- Second Quality Assurance of Lending Portfolio (QALP-2)
- Audited Financial Reports
- Quarterly project progress reports shared with the World Bank by the implementing agency.

Documents prepared and shared electronically by the IEM Jordan Project with the ICR team:

- Haddad M. 2012. Aqaba Marketing Strategy 2012 – 2014. Report prepared for the IEM Jordan Project.
- Haddad M. 2012. Aqaba: Literature Review - Initial Study Prepared by IEM JRV Marketing Consultant.
- Haddad M. 2012. Shobak Proposed Protected Area Ecotourism Development. Prepared for IEM Jordan Project.
- Haddad M. 2012. Yarmouk Marketing Strategy 2012-2014. Prepared for IEM Jordan Project.
- IEM Jordan. 2012. Status Brief. Power Point Presentation prepared by the Jordan IEM Project for the CPPR in 2012.
- Jordan IEM Project / Bab El Salam Women's Cooperative. Organic Farming to Conserve Environment Project. Project proposal prepared by the Bab El Salam Women's Cooperative with technical assistance from the Jordan IEM Project, for submission to the GEF Small Grants Program. 2012.
- Jordan IEM Project / Bab El Salam Women's Cooperative. Local Integrated Management for the Tal Al Arbaeen SCA – Jordan River Special Conservation Area. Proposal Prepared by the Bab El Salam Women's Cooperative with technical assistance from the Jordan IEM Project for funding from the Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund in 2012. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project / Ghor Fifa Cooperative. 2012. Proposal to the GEF Small Grants Program: Sustainable Agricultural Around Fifa Protected Area. Proposal prepared by Ghor Fifa Cooperative with technical assistance from the Jordan IEM Project. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project / Karak Municipality Employees Cooperative. 2008. Proposal to the GEF Small Grants Program: Integrated Ecosystem Management and Eco Tourism in Wadi Bin Hammad. Proposal prepared by Karak Municipality Employees Cooperative with technical assistance by Jordan IEM Project. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project. Fifa Protected Area – Operational Plan for 2013 ; protection and monitoring plan 2012; Research Plan (in Arabic)
- Jordan IEM Project. 'Integrating Biodiversity in Land Use Planning Guidelines - Round II- Conceptual Summary'. Power Point Presentation. 2013.
- Jordan IEM Project. 'Land Use Planning Guidelines for Jordan Rift Valley. Conservation Development Perspective. October 2012- Draft I
- Jordan IEM Project. 3-page briefs on different topics lessons learnt, including: report of land use component achievements; final report of the climate change component; final report of the community development unit; and knowledge management final report (all in Arabic).
- Jordan IEM Project. Aqaba Bird Observatory – Before and After. Power Point Presentation. Not dated.
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- Jordan IEM Project. Economic Feasibility for Development and Marketing of Olive Oil in Yarmouk Area. Prepared by Dr. Amin Shammout. 2011. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project. Economic Feasibility for Development and Marketing of Basket Weaving in Yarmouk Area. Prepared by Dr. Amin Shammout. 2012. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project. Economic Feasibility for Development and Marketing of Waste Recycling in Shuleh Area. Prepared by Dr. Amin Shammout. 2011. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project. Fifa Protected Area - Evaluation of Management Effectiveness. 2012.
- Jordan IEM Project. Fifa Protected Area – Management Plan. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project. Fifa Protected Area – Protection Plan 2012. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project. Framework for inclusion of climate change into PA management plans (in Arabic)
- Jordan IEM Project. Homret Maeen SCA – Communication Plan. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project. Homret Maeen SCA – Protection Plan 2013. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project. Homret Maeen SCAs - Operational Plans 2011, 2012, 2013 (in Arabic)
- Jordan IEM Project. Integrated Ecosystem Management in Wadi Bin Hammad SCA (in Arabic).
- Jordan IEM Project. Integrated Ecosystem Management in Yarmouk SCA (in Arabic).
- Jordan IEM Project. Khayyounf SCA – Action Plan for 2012 and for 2013. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project. Knowledge Management Component Inception, Progress, and Final Reports
- Jordan IEM Project. Mushroom project internal rate of return calculation. Excel sheet. In Arabic.
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- Jordan IEM Project. Project Proposal Application Form to the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for Project: Women Empowerment Through Socio-Economic Development at Dibeen and FIFA. 2013.
- Jordan IEM Project. Rahma EcoCamp Feasibility. Not dated.
- Jordan IEM Project. RSCN Land Use Unit – Overview. Power Point Presentation Prepared by Asma Al Khuraisat. Not dated.
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- Jordan IEM Project. Shoubak Protected Area – RSCN Strategy to Gain Community Support for Shoubak Protected Area (in Arabic).
- Jordan IEM Project. Special Conservation Areas. Power Point Presentation. Not dated.
- Jordan IEM Project. Summary of all Institutional Partnerships and Initiatives. List prepared for the ICR Review. 2013.
- Jordan IEM Project. Summary of Special Conservation Areas – updated January 2013.
- Jordan IEM Project. Swaimah Eco Park – Assessment Study. Prepared by RSCN. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project. Tal Al Arbaeen SCA – Action Plan for 2013. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project. Training Needs Assessment Form. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project. Training Needs Assessment Profiles. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project. Training Needs Assessment Report. 2012. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project. Training Programs Final Report. Prepared by Moath Abu Ajamieh for Jordan IEM Project. 2013. In Arabic.

- Jordan IEM Project. Training Programs Plan Report. Prepared by Moath Abu Ajamieh for Jordan IEM Project. 2012. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project. Trust Fund Capital Increase Report. Excel Sheet. In Arabic.
- Jordan IEM Project. Vegetable trials Using Water Box in Tal Al-Arbreen. Brochure.
- Jordan IEM Project. Wild Jordan Estimated Prefeasibility Calculation Sheet. Excel file.
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- Thorne J. 2012. Climate Change Strategy Report - Recommended approaches for RSCN. Prepared for IEM Project.

Other:

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Annex 8. List of Stakeholders Met during the ICR Preparation Mission

Name	Organization	Function
Mazen Rayyan	Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority	Director of Environment Directorate
Mohammed Yousef	Birdlife / Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)	Program leader
Mahmoud Bdour	Dana Rehabilitation Project/USAID	Project Director
Yousef Al-Shamary	Friends of Earth/Wadi Khaled Cooperative Society / Jordanian Himmeh	-
Munir Adgham	GEF Small Grants Program	Senior Project Manager
Ali Hazaimah	IEM / RSCN	Logistic Officer
Nazir Malas	IEM / RSCN	Procurement and Implementation Specialist
Nesrin Askoul	IEM / RSCN	Monitoring and evaluation officer
Rania Faouri	IEM / RSCN	Communications specialist
Rasha Haymour	IEM / RSCN	Landuse unit
Tarek Abulhawa	IEM / RSCN	Project coordinator
Ziad Awadallah	IEM / RSCN	Field operations officer
Ali a'soub	JOHUD	Community Development Coordinator (Wadi Ben Hamad)
Mohammad Al-Naimi	JOHUD	Environmental Economics Program
Muttasim Al-Hayari	JOHUD	Natural Resource Director
Maryam Malkawi	JOHUD/ Mansoura Development Center	Director
Ahmad Said	Jordan Valley Authority	Head of Planning
Taha Al-Zboun	Jordan Development Zones Company	CEO
Amal Zanoun	Jordan Development Zones Company	Director of Projects and Infrastructure Devt
Mousa Al-Ali	Local community	-
Ammar Jaradat	Ministry of Agriculture	Head of forestry department / Bani Kinana
Iyas Al-Rousan	Ministry of Agriculture	Forestry ranger
Ahmad Al-Omari	Department of Forestry	Environmental guide
H.E. Ahmed Katarneh	Ministry of Environment	Secretary General
Raed Bani Hani	Ministry of Environment	Director of Nature and Conservation Unit
Izzat Abu Hamra	Ministry of Environment	Director of Licensing department
Ahmad Al-Jazzar	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation	Head of Water and Agriculture Unit
Hazem Kanaan	Ministry of Tourism	-
Sahar Al Barari	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities	Head of Communication, Media and International Cooperation Unit
Amjad Bataineh	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities	Director of Antiquities Directorate / Bani Kinana
Khaled Bawwat	Protected area / Fifa	Fisheries Farmer
Ibrahim Huwaitat	Protected area / Fifa	Ranger
Sayel Tarawneh	Protected area / Fifa	Contractor
Sharifeh Bawwat	Protected area / Fifa Ghor Fifa Women's Cooperative Society	President
Shiraz Bawwat	Protected area / Fifa	-
Halimeh Al-Sa'deen	Protected area / Fifa	-
Ibrahim Mahasneh	Protected area / Fifa	-
Fahideh Sa'deen	Protected area / Fifa - Maamoura Women	President

Name	Organization	Function
	Local Development Society	
Fatheyra Bawwat	Protected area / Fifa - Ghor Fifa Local Development Society	President
Mohammad Malkawi	Protected area / Yarmouk	PA Manager
Yousef Khushshal	Protected area /Yarmouk	Contractor
Shaaban Malkawi	Protected area /Yarmouk	Environmental researcher
Essmat Al-Shiyab	RSCN	Institutional Development Manager
Muath Abu Ajamien	RSCN	Training Coordinator
Nashat Hamidan	RSCN	Conservation Specialist / Acting RSCN Director
Hussein Al-Kisswani	RSCN	Climate Change Officer
Batool Abd-Aljawad	SCA / Aqaba Bird Observatory	Environmental Education Coordinator
Feras Rahahleh	SCA / Aqaba Bird Observatory	Observatory Manager
Jafaar Snyan	SCA / Homret Maeen	Head Ranger
Awad Farhoud	SCA / Homret Maeen	Ranger
Esmail Jaanat	SCA / Homret Maeen	Ranger
Hussein Oweidat	SCA / Homret Maeen	Coordinator
Mohammad Saadi	SCA / Khayyounf	
Ihtiram M'adat	SCA / Khayyounf	Responsible for soap production
Sabah Khalaf	SCA / Khayyounf	
Tamam Saadi	SCA / Khayyounf	
Kamal Tawalbeh	SCA / Shuleh	Local community coordination officer
Rana Maitah	SCA / Wadi Bin Hammad	Management unit coordinator
Madallah Ewesat	SCA / Wadi Bin Hammad	Ranger
Aid Maitah	SCA / Wadi Bin Hammad	Member
Seham Maitah	SCA / Wadi Bin Hammad - Bateer Women's Cooperative Society	Chair
Ahmad Obeidat	Shuleh Municipality	Mayor
Mohammad Alatoom	UNDP	Environment Programme Analyst

Annex 9. Photographs

Note: Unless otherwise stated, all photographs are taken by the ICR mission in June 2013.



Local community consultations in Swaimenh during implementation. *Source: Tarek Abul Hawa.*



Local community consultations in Wadi Araba during implementation. *Source: Tarek Abul Hawa.*



Local community consultations in Shuleh during project implementation. *Source: Tarek Abul Hawa.*



Fifa PA – Bus stop provided by the Jordan IEM Project for local communities' use. Ten bus stations in total were provided (Fifa (4), Mamoura (3), and Safi (3)).



Fifa PA – ICR team meeting with local cooperatives' representatives in meeting room equipped by the Project and used by local cooperatives for training purposes.



Fifa PA – Aarak Tree (toothbrush tree) (*salvadora persica*), one of the ecosystem-specific species protected in Fifa, and almost extinct elsewhere in Jordan.



Fifa PA – Jordan IEM Project facilities for marketing local cooperatives products (June 2013).



Fifa PA – Management office facilities (June 2013).



Fifa PA – Local community development activities around PA - sustainable farming / aquaculture unit.



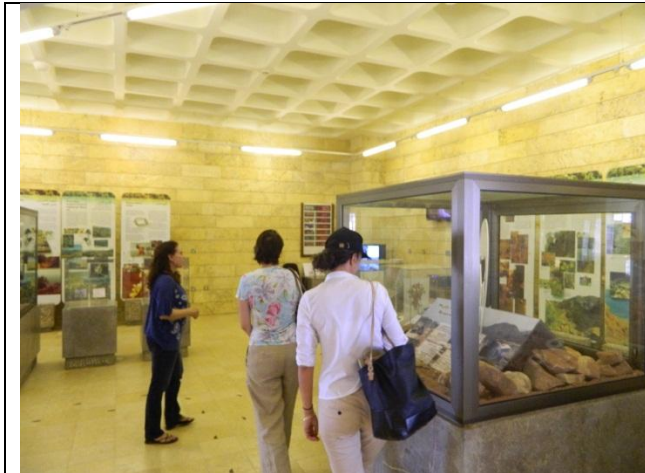
Homret Maeen and Swaimah Ecopark SCA – Water boxes to increase water use efficiency.



Homret Maeen and Swaimah Ecopark SCA – General view.



Dead Sea Panorama Complex. Managed through MOU with the MOTA. Houses the Homret Maeen SCA unit.



Dead Sea Panorama Complex – Dead Sea Museum.



Wadi Bin Hammad SCA – Sign for Batir soap production unit on the Batir Women's Cooperative building.



Wadi Bin Hammad SCA – Prepared soap. Since its inception, 180 soaps were sold to hospitals and events.



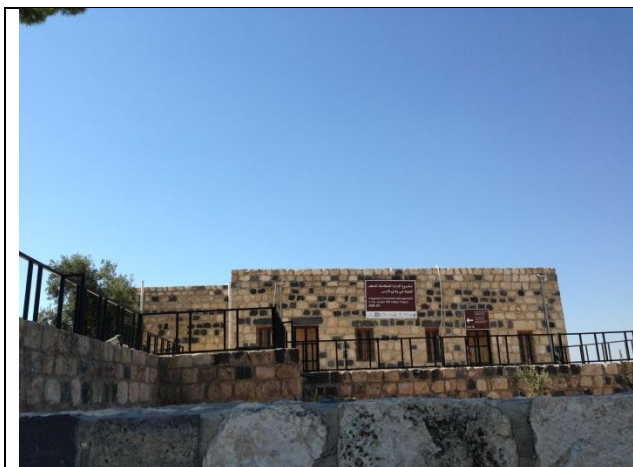
Wadi Bin Hammad SCA – Inside the soap production unit.



Wadi Bin Hammad SCA – Rehabilitation of irrigation canals. The project rehabilitated almost 3,600 m of irrigation canals.



Umm Qais - Three rooms are dedicated to RSCN, including 1 for local community products. Cooperation with MOTA allows linking the archaeology / nature experiences in Umm Qais and Yarmouk PA.



Umm Qais – Yarmouk PA management office in Umm Qais (MOTA contribution).



Yarmouk PA – Management office facilities (June 2013).



Yarmouk PA – Management office facilities – panoramic windows over the PA (June 2013).



Yarmouk PA – Climate change fence ins.



Yarmouk PA – Deciduous Oak tree.



Yarmouk PA / Shuleh SCA – ICR mission meeting with local stakeholders.



Khayyounf SCA – View of the wadi. The caravan is contribution of Jordan IEM Project and serves as site management unit.



Khayyounf SCA – Rain water collection cistern.



Khayyounf SCA – Visitor camping facilities (not operational at time of visit).



Birket Al-Arayes SCA – Example of community mobilization to establish an SCA – a catalytic activity of the Jordan IEM project.



ABO SCA – Entrance to the Aqaba Bird Observatory. Another example of community initiative to establish an SCA.



ABO SCA – Site management office (Jordan IEM contribution).



Aqaba ABO SCA – Before establishment of the SCA.
Source: Feras Rahahleh.



Aqaba ABO SCA – Same location. After SCA establishment and intervention. *Source: Feras Rahahleh*



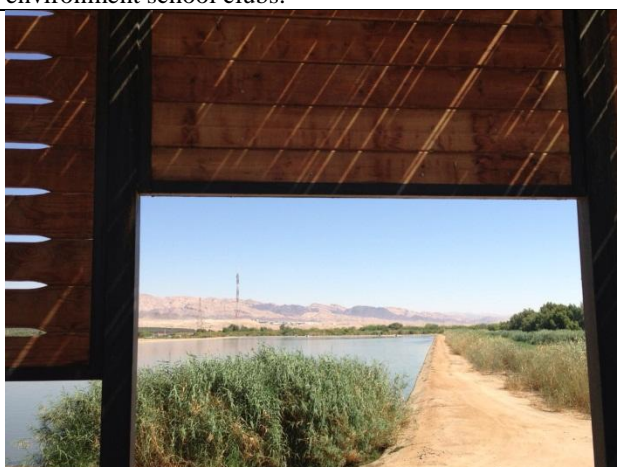
ABO SCA – One of the restored ponds in the ABO.



ABO SCA – local flora demonstration site. Cleaning and planting events were organized in cooperation with local environment school clubs.

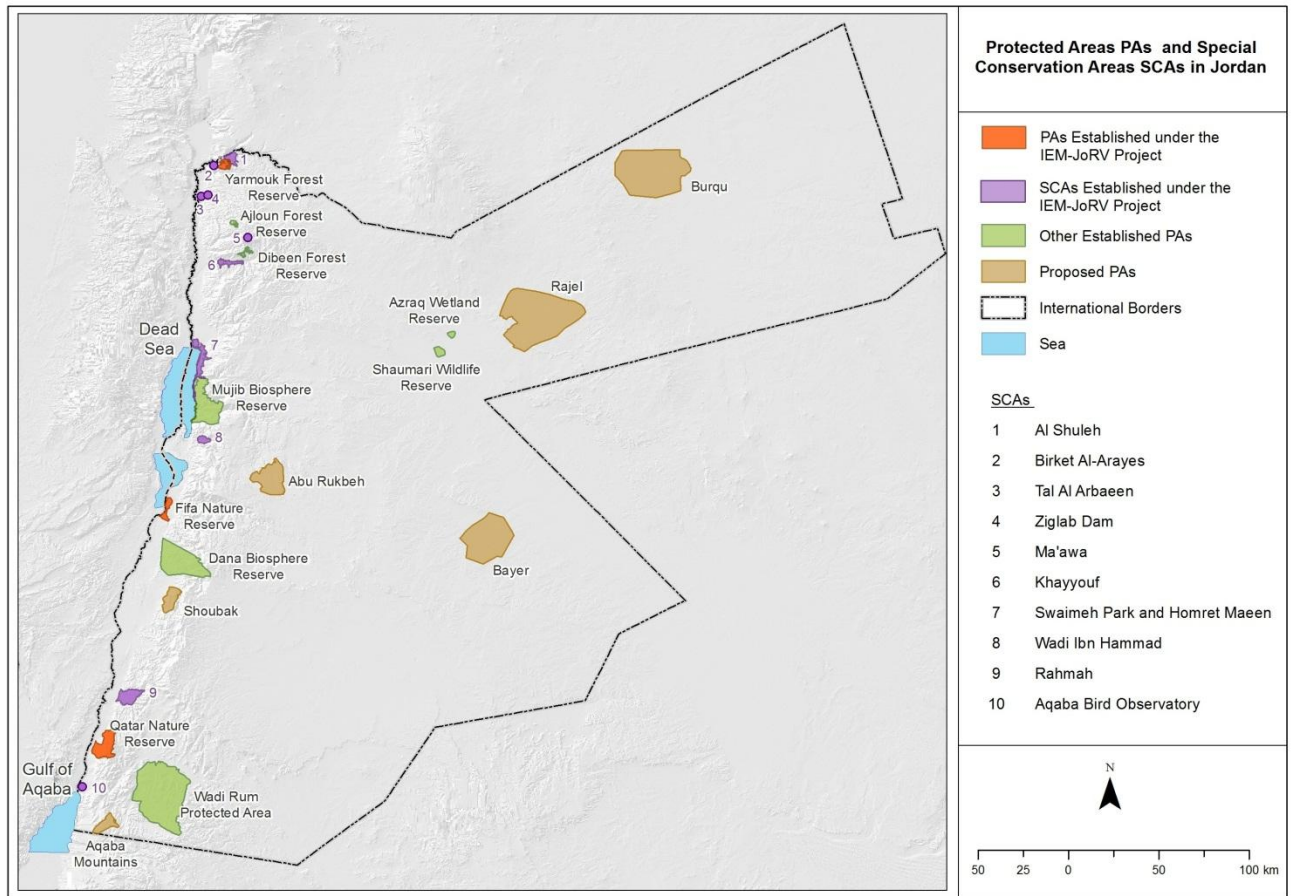


Aqaba ABO SCA - School field visit. Initially 20 schools were targeted, but the ABO is receiving additional requests. *Source: Feras Rahahleh.*



Aqaba ABO SCA – Bird observation area.

Annex 10. Map



Source: Map prepared by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature Geographical Information System Unit, with modifications.