



JORDAN

CONTEXT

Jordan has an arid climate and fragile ecological systems. The country has suffered severely from a rapid population increase resulting from political factors in the second half of the 1900s. This has affected natural resources and the environment; most of the country is now subject to some form of desertification.

Land degradation in Jordan has major socio-economic impacts on the national economy, as well as on the livelihoods of rural and Bedouin communities. The World Bank estimates the annual economic cost of environmental degradation in Jordan at 3.1% of gross domestic product (GDP), with total losses of 205 million dinars (JD) across five sectors. Most of these financial losses are caused by rangeland degradation (costing the equivalent of 0.46% of GDP) and soil salinity (0.14% of GDP).

Jordan relies greatly on external assistance and therefore donor policies and priorities have had a significant impact on national development over the last 50 years. More recently, foreign assistance has focused above all on direct budget support, followed by water management and social development.

CHALLENGES

Jordan's natural resources are very limited. Only about 5% of its land is considered arable, and it is one of the most water-deficit countries in the world. Major challenges facing the government include promoting the sustainable use of natural resources for agriculture, and ensuring adequate water supply for domestic use.

The main causes of desertification in Jordan are: inappropriate land use; changing cultivation practices; deforestation; soil erosion; natural disasters; urbanization; and the pumping of water from aquifers.


Although desertification issues are a priority on the national agenda, they have not been integrated into sectoral and inter-sectoral policies. Therefore, the institutional, technical and financial resources for combating desertification are limited.

Analysis of the situation has revealed shortcomings in the coordination mechanisms, the institutional, legal and policy frameworks, and the allocation of financial resources for activities and initiatives to combat desertification.



Total population (million), 2007: 5.72
Surface area (thousands km²), 2007: 88.8
Forest area (thousands km²), 2005: 0.8
Agricultural land (% of surface area), 2005: 11.5
GDP (current USD, billion), 2007: 15.83
GDP growth (annual %), 2007: 6.0
External debt (current USD, millions), 2006: 8,000
Foreign direct investments (current USD, millions), 2006: 3,219
UNCCD ratification: 1995

Source: World Development Indicators Database, 2008

 The Global Mechanism (GM) was established under Article 21 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and began its operations in October 1997. The GM is defined as an organizational entity mandated "to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of existing financial mechanisms... [and]... to promote actions leading to the mobilization and channelling of substantial financial resources to affected developing country Parties."

COMMON OBJECTIVES

The Global Mechanism (GM) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC), in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment (MOE), are building a partnership to develop an Integrated Financing Strategy (IFS) for combating desertification in Jordan. An IFS is a guiding framework for locating and developing a mix of financial resources to fund programmes and projects that combat desertification and enhance sustainable land management (SLM).

Through this tool, the partners aim to enhance the enabling policy, legislative, institutional and incentive frameworks, broaden stakeholder participation, and improve coordination among national and external stakeholders. Institutional, policy and financial aspects will be analyzed in depth to identify challenges and opportunities.

The IFS is accompanied by an National Action Programme (NAP) containing a set of activities for locating and mobilizing the necessary resources from various funding sources and for establishing an enabling environment for such activities.

WHERE DO WE STAND ON IMPLEMENTATION?

The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation has mobilized a team of environmental, financial and legal experts to finalize the IFS by the end of 2008. The methodology adopted to develop the IFS is based on analysis of NAP thematic areas and priorities, national planning and budgetary processes, and bilateral and multilateral programming priorities.

Consultations at the national level engaged a range of national stakeholders, development cooperation agencies, civil society and other relevant entities in reaching consensus on the way forward. The IFS will identify several process-oriented initiatives to facilitate inter-sectoral coordination, broaden stakeholder participation, establish formal partnerships and initiate policy dialogue.

A draft of the IFS will be presented to national stakeholders and development partners for validation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION



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NEXT STEPS

The IFS action plan will be founded on a results-based management (RBM) system and will be made operational through the following steps:

1. validation of the IFS and the NAP;
2. strengthening of the National Committee for Combating Desertification (NCCD);
3. prioritization of interventions to achieve the planned IFS outcomes and outputs; and
4. mobilization of resources for the first phase of implementation.

This will translate into actions for mobilizing and channeling substantial financial and other resources to support UNCCD implementation.