



INTERNATIONAL WATERS RESULTS NOTES

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Gulf of Aqaba Environmental Action Plan

GEFID#: TF-28316, GEF Agency Project ID#: P005237, Project Status: Completed



1. Development of Regulatory and Institutional Framework: The Environment Department was fully integrated into Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA), allowing Aqaba to become the only region in Jordan where a legalized Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) system is enforced. Intensive preparatory work on a CZM framework paid off and the project showed that crossing institutional borders through having different ministries and organizations participate together in training and capacity building activities can enhance overall implementation effectiveness.

2. Oil spill risk minimization and waste oil recovery: During implementation, project staff initiated a dialogue with three major producers of waste oil to tackle the issue of land based oil recovery. Not only was the dialogue successful in leading to group consensus on the issue, but a national oil refinery agreed to accept and pay JD35/ton for the recovered waste oil, thereby eliminating a source of pollution. The project demonstrated that well designed cost recovery mechanisms with strong enforcement can help to ensure financial sustainability. The Port Authority has also upgraded all its facilities into environmental compliance under the new ASEZA laws, a notable achievement.

3. Development and Implementation of the Jordanian Marine Park: Zoning and infrastructure of marine park facilities have been completed, including: 4 jetties (2 funded by the project), terrestrial demarcation, toilet and shower facilities, umbrellas, parking, camping grounds, ranger posts, and first-aid station. The Visitor Center (photo above) has been completed, including multi-media equipment, interpretation and public awareness activities.

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PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The primary objective is to enable Jordan to take the lead in establishing and implementing a regional collaborative framework for sustainable management and protection of the Gulf of Aqaba and the conservation of its coral reef.

RESULTS: PROCESS

The goals and objectives agreed amongst the stakeholders were clearly defined using a participatory approach of all stakeholders, including the local population. On-the-job training and motivational tools contributed to the full integration of managerial and operational project staff and of the project's Environmental Department, created by the project, into ASEZA. This was an essential element towards sustaining the achievements of the project. As to groundwater protection, ASEZA has acquired the model to assess the annual yield of the aquifer as well as to simulate the path lines of pollution into the Gulf. It will also assist in tracing the sources of pollution in the groundwater aquifers.

INDICATOR #1: Institutional and Regulatory Framework

Environmental unit staffed and trained, performance standards adopted. Enforcement regulations adopted and policing actions undertaken; active transboundary cooperation with staff training exchanges as well as monitoring techniques shared.

INDICATOR #2: Transboundary groundwater protection

Successful despite the political circumstances, and transboundary groundwater assessment completed.

RESULTS: STRESS REDUCTION

The Memorandum of Understanding between the Ports Authority and ASEZA, defining responsibilities for oil spill response and legal measures as well as outlining preventive measures for chemical oil spill prevention, has been signed. The Port Authority has upgraded all its facilities into environmental compliance under the new ASEZA laws, a notable achievement.

The mandate to protect the marine environment has been clearly established under the Environmental Protection By-Law (Arts. 52-64). The annual Marine Park Management Plan is updated on a regular basis and being implemented. Response of the Aqaba community to the Marine Park Beach has been very positive, as demonstrated by the exemplary usage of the beach, particularly on weekend days, and respect for the coral reef and fishes.

INDICATOR #1: Oil Spill measures and Waste oil recovery

The Memorandum of Understanding between the Ports Authority and ASEZA has been signed, and demonstration actions for waste oil recovery underway.

INDICATOR #2: Protections of coral reefs

Staff in place, boundaries defined, management plan completed, policing and enforcement actions in place