

Rud Shour, Shirin and Minab International wetland, which is located at a distance of 10 to 70 Kms to the east of Bandar Abbas along the northern coast of Straight Hormuz in Persian Gulf, covers an area of 78099 acres and lies across from Hormuz island in the delta of Shour and Shirin rivers at a sea level with coordinates 27° 05' N 56° E45. This coastal region is 60 kms in length, stretching out from the northern coasts of Hormuz Strait belonging to Bandar Abbas region in the west all the way to Zarani river in the east. The mangrove forests with an area of 1700 acres are located in this region at N10,27 to 52,26 and E56,59, to 56 23. This wetland is categorized as a coastal-marine wetland.

This 45000-acre area, which is an important habitat for mangrove in Hormozagan Province, was designated "Rud Shour, Shirin and Minan International wetland" in 1975 according to Ramsar Convention. The wetland with an area of 41258 was named "Tiab & Minab Protected area in 2001 and Environmental Protection department was tasked with protecting the region. The area of wetland was expanded in 2008, reaching 78099 acres.

In the domain of Bandar Abbas, this area is located in estuaries of Isin, Takht, and Shamil in the central district of Bandar Abbas (Koulghan in estuaries of Jalabi, Hassan Langi and estuary of Shour river). The wetland is located in the coastal and estuaries of Tiab and Sandarak located in the central district (Tiab and Kolhai forests in estuaries of Mashdar, Behineh and Gorgan).

The main estuaries and rivers stretching out from east to west in this area are as follows: Kargol estuary, Chakha estuary, Bandzark Estuary, Nobar estuary, Kolahi Estuary, Mazagh Estuary, Tiab Estuary, Hassan langi river, Jalabi River, second Shour River and First Shour River.

For most time of the year, the rivers situated in this area are often dried up or they have low discharge volume in most seasons. However, the occurrence of cloudbursts, particularly, in winter brings about floods. The area has a tropical to subtropical climate, with hot and humid weather for most part. The area is exposed to two types of wind: the wind blowing from inland to the sea, which is called North wind, and the other wind blowing from the sea to the inland, which is called

East wind. There is also a local wind called Soheil wind, which blows from south east to the North West in late May, June and August. The maximum temperature reaches 45 centigrade degree in the summer. Since the wetland area is one of the hottest regions in Iran, freezing during winter rarely occurs. The annual precipitation ranges from 100 to 300 mm in October to April. Due to the low-slope coastal area of the wetland, there is a long distance between the 6-meter depth of sea and the last flowage line so that when the ebb occurs, the water will recede, creating an extensive habitat within the tidal perimeters.

The Wetland Water Sources

As already mentioned, this wetland is located in the coastal area of Hormuz Strait, submerged by water. Yet, the following water sources have limited and local impact the environmental conditions, particularly, water quality:

Precipitation: maximum prescription occurs in February so that winter precipitation accounts for 80% of annual rain, and the precipitation level is next to zero in the summer.

Permanent rivers: e.g. Minab river, Shour River, Hassan Langi river

Seasonal Rivers: Gourband River, Zarrani River, canal (waterway channels) due to precipitation

Vegetation Cover of the Area

The vegetation of this wetland area is mainly covered by *Avicenna marina*, located in the deltas and along the tidal canals. In some areas, there are sparse forest with trees such as *Acacia* Mesquites, Jujube, tamarisk and palm tree.

Fauna Environment

The estuary of Shour, Shirin, and Mina rivers serves as the winter habitat for waterbirds and waders, such as oystercatchers, Curlew, Dalmatian pelican and several other species. This area is perhaps the breeding habitat for some herons including Goliath heron and Indian pond heron. Furthermore, the *Avicenna marina* and shallow coasts serve as good hatching and breeding habitats for aquatic animals including crustaceans and fish. Some aquatic animals are very important for fisheries.

The species of fish found in this area are as follows: white pomfret, Black pomfret, Javelingrunter, Sciaenidae, Cutlassfish, Pufferfish, Mullidae, *Trachionotus*, *Gerres longirostris*, wolf herring, Sardine, John's snapper, Eagle rays, Porgy Fish, Triplespines, Catfish.....

Mangrove habitat is also home to Mudskipper, which is also called Ichthyosaur. The species of mammals living in this include fox, black mouse, humped dolphin and jackal. The reptiles in this region include hawksbill sea turtle, Green sea turtle, and sea snakes.

Management Plan

The development of a comprehensive plan for the management of Rud Shour, Shirin and Minab Wetland came to fruition through the participation of stakeholders and beneficiaries in 4 workshops. We appreciate all the effective efforts made by the various groups in these workshops. In fact, the development of this plan is mainly characterized by this collective efforts and cooperation.

In each one of these workshops, more than 60 representatives of local and provincial institutions, as well as representatives from local communities participated in the meetings, making useful contributions to the discussions. Following each workshop, all participants were provided with the final report of each workshop, aimed at eliciting their final comment. Then, after the organization of these workshops, the final version of the comprehensive management plan was issued after being approved by the senior provincial and national officials.

The main issues to be discussed in these workshops include the following:

the values and functions of the wetland, wetland stakeholders and users, problems relating to the wetland, defining the general vision and goal, setting the strategic goals of the comprehensive wetland management plan, determining the main issues and short-term and long-term goals, determining the priority measures and responsible bodies , reviewing the structure required for the implementation of the wetland participatory management plan, designing the monitoring system of wetland management plan, preparing the organizational structure at the provincial and local levels, developing the monitoring protocols of management plan and preparing the wetland zoning map.

The comprehensive plan for the management of Rudshour, Shirin and Minab wetlands will be implemented based on a 5-year action plan, in which the most important executive activities and responsibilities assigned to each one of the relevant groups for the priority actions have been identified.