



Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project

Priority Project Portfolio



United Nations
Development Programme



Department
of Environment





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Acronyms

CEPA	Communications, Education, Participation and Awareness
CIWP	Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project
DoE	Department of Environment
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoE	Ministry of Energy
MOJA	Ministry of Agricultural Jihad
MPO	Management and Planning Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPD	National Project Director
NPM	National Project Manager
PCO	Project Central Office
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RDTF	Resource Development Task Force
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme



1. Introduction

Iran hosts the most important wetlands of the Middle East. These dynamic and highly productive ecosystems directly and indirectly support the livelihoods of millions of Iranians and a rich biodiversity. They provide vital ecosystem services that are crucial for sustainable development and human security and well-being. Despite these remarkable benefits, the consequences of wetland degradation and destruction are already apparent throughout Iran, and are having severe consequences for human security and biodiversity. Critical examples include Lake Uromiyeh, Parishan wetland and the Hamoun Wetlands which have all suffered severe restriction of water inflows and (in the first case) major infrastructure developments, causing dramatic loss of biodiversity and ecosystem goods and services, as well as severe dust storms. These have had devastating consequences for many local communities who have lost their livelihoods. These, and other, problems are mirrored in many smaller wetlands around the country. A specific problem for wetlands is that they are greatly affected by upstream land and water management practices (sometimes tens or hundreds of kilometers away), particularly in terms of the impacts on water quantity and quality. It goes without saying that effective management of water resources and related wetlands in inland and trans-boundary basins require a holistic approach at basin scale, formal agreements, excellent and win-win communications, improved capacity of national NGOs and more importantly adequate international support to help introduce best practices.

During the last 10 years, and in recognition of these challenges and needs, the Government of I.R.I has invested more than 20 million US dollars through the Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project (CIWP) and other mechanisms, matched by approximately 5.6 million dollars of international support (GEF and Government of Japan, UNDP) to help introduce new best practices. This has been highly successful, bringing about a transformation in the way the government is approaching wetland conservation. Given the continuing urgent need to address wetland conservation challenges across the country, a decision has been taken to extend this approach to 2019, for which a formal CIWP Strategy, 2015-19 has been prepared. This project portfolio, has been drawn from the Strategy through close collaboration with UNDP and DoE, and represents the most urgent needs for further international support to introduce further best practices and stimulate transformational change. The portfolio offers a unique integrated framework for bilateral and multilateral cooperation and coordination at both national and international level to reverse the current trend in wetland loss and degradation.

In this portfolio, the proposed projects are framed by the following objectives of the 5-year CIWP strategy:

- To seek durable solution for conservation of Iranian wetlands through engaging national and international key actors
- To empower the local communities through improved skills, access to ecosystem goods and services and livelihood opportunities
- To support the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the area of better wetland management, water and environment

The portfolio is structured into two parts. Part one provides a situational analysis, highlighting the strategy to address the needs and gaps, coordination and resource mobilization plan and the means for measuring project progress. Part two presents a summary of seven proposed projects which details social, environmental and economic results, objectives, activities and corresponding budgets. The portfolio is an aspirational document which is being used to secure support from national government/non-government sources, international donors and technical partners, and will be further elaborated in detailed project proposals as funding becomes available.





PART I: OVERVIEW OF THE PORTFOLIO

2. Situational Analysis

2.1. Context

Iran's wetlands continue to be seriously threatened by the combined impacts of upstream water infra-structure developments (mainly dams), non-sustainable agricultural practices and climate change. These impacts have severe consequences for wetland dependent communities and biodiversity, and have reached a critical situation for some wetlands. CIWP during its first 10 years of working experience has played a key role in turning the afore-mentioned threats into constructive opportunities on Iranian wetland conservation. CIWP has successfully introduced ecosystem-based approaches for the conservation of Iranian wetlands through providing evidence-based policy arguments and practical solutions to support wiser decision-making in favor of wetlands, capacity development, new laws and guidelines, management planning, community participation and raised awareness. Recent environmental issues in Iran, many of which result from unsustainable resource use (particularly water) and climate change, have brought the conservation of wetland ecosystems to the highest attention of Government and UNDP because of the consequences for human security. UNDP and the Department of the Environment continue to be lead partners, supporting the core costs of the CIWP interventions and assuring effective project management. Project governance is through the existing CIWP Steering Committee comprising different national governmental organizations and UNDP.

2.2. Policy framework

The Ramsar Convention was adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971 and came into force in 1975. It is the oldest of the modern global intergovernmental environmental agreements. The Ramsar Convention's mission is "the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world". In February 1971, Iran's Game and Fish Department had the honor to host a conference at the Caspian seaside resort of Ramsar, Iran where the "Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat" was agreed and the treaty was signed by representatives of 18 nations including the Government of Iran. Since then, Iran in a similar way to the other Contracting Parties has sought to implement the Ramsar Convention in its territory and collaborate on shared projects. This has included the development and hosting of a Ramsar Regional Centre for S&W Asia.

Under the three pillars of the Ramsar Convention, the Islamic republic of Iran has committed to work towards the wise use of all its wetlands, ensure that effective management of wetlands are in place and cooperate internationally on trans-boundary wetlands, shared wetland systems and shared species.

Meanwhile, the government of the Islamic republic of Iran has formulated several components on the ecosystem approach to management of wetlands being included in 4th and 5th National Development Plan. The components seek to advocate the adoption of wetland integrated management plans in the area of biodiversity, lands, water and living resources which promote conservation and sustainable use of wetlands in an equitable way.

2.3. People of concern

The ultimate beneficiaries of the proposed projects will be the local communities of Iran and neighboring countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq who directly depend on wetlands for their livelihoods and security as well as all those people who benefit from the many ecosystem services provided by wetlands (water, food, climate moderation etc).

Community groups, NGOs and the media provide the key links between CIWP and these primary beneficiaries.

Therefore capacity building activities will be organized for them so they can fulfill their roles and responsibilities of support to local communities as well as advocacy.

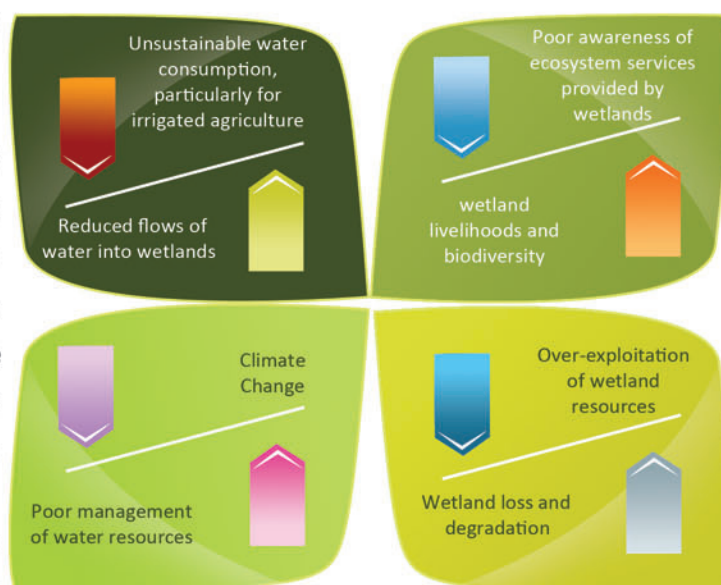
In addition to these primary beneficiaries, CIWP will engage with, and be relevant to, a very wide range of stakeholders including public sector agencies at the national provincial and local levels, universities, research institutes and the private sector.



2.4. Needs and gaps analysis

The most severe impacts on wetlands arise from the unsustainable use of water, mainly for agriculture. Food security is a priority of the Government, but has resulted in more irrigated areas and dams; at the same time more water is needed for energy production, domestic use and industries. Even under current resource use patterns, there is not enough water to meet Iran's direct human needs and to maintain the environment's life support systems. Climate change is also increasing the uncertainty in water management and making it more difficult to close the gap between water demand and supply. Development decisions, particularly for large dams, water transfers and large irrigation schemes, are too often taken within the water and agriculture sectors, without considering the impacts on the environment. Furthermore, the values of the ecosystem services provided by wetlands, and the potential costs of losing these, are not adequately factored into the decision-making.

Continuing with "business as usual" is therefore no longer an option. It is essential to up-scale existing successful approaches and introduce new models of development that do not hinder prosperity, but which reduce resource use to sustainable levels that no longer threaten the functioning of wetlands.



2.5. Key achievements and results

Since the launch of Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project (CIWP) in 2005 between the Government of IR Iran and UNDP / Global Environment Facility to address the national wetland crisis, CIWP has sought to address the root causes of the damage to Iran's wetlands by applying the Convention on Biological Diversity's Ecosystem Approach at three levels:

- At local (site) level: by engaging and empowering local communities in the management of wetlands, and by building the capacity of the local offices of the DOE and other stakeholders to manage the threats that arise within the wetland itself

- At basin level: by engaging provincial stakeholders in the integrated management of wetlands to address externally-arising threats, and by raising public awareness.
- At national level: by building the capacity of national DOE for the integrated management of Iran's wetland protected areas, and by mainstreaming wetland conservation measures into other sectoral ministries.

The key results between 2005 and 2014 include the following:

Key Achievements of CIWP, 2005-2014

- 1 Successfully introduced participatory ecosystem-based approaches for the conservation of Iran's wetlands, and now rolling this process out in 11 provinces
- 2 Secured more than USD 5.6 million of investment from international sources, and USD 20 million from the Government for the conservation of Iranian wetlands
- 3 Raised awareness of the need to conserve wetlands through more than 2000 newspaper magazine and website articles, 200 television broadcasts, festivals and other activities.
- 4 Supported the livelihoods and resilience of more than 50,000 people in wetland communities by promoting sustainable wetland management
- 5 Prepared a Pre-final Parliament Act on "Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable use of wetlands based on the Ecosystem Approach"
- 6 Established integrated wetland management at 3 wetlands of international importance, and up-scaled this to 7 new wetlands
- 7 Disseminated a large number of technical tools, guidelines and publications
- 8 Introduced sustainable agriculture to over 30,000 ha around 2 wetlands (>40 villages), to save water for wetlands
- 9 Introduced innovative Drought Risk Management planning for Lake Urmia

3. Strategy

The CIWP Strategy, 2015-2019 builds on successful experiences to achieve even greater impact and stronger partnerships. It up-scales existing approaches and adds new ones, with the aim of reversing the current trend in wetland loss and degradation.

CIWP's Goal for this period is:

"The condition of Iran's wetland ecosystems is improving as measured by area, livelihoods and biodiversity".

The specific Objective is:

"Government, communities and the public value Iran's wetlands for their contribution to sustainable development, and are implementing concerted actions to conserve and restore them".

The Strategy will be delivered through 3 integrated Outcomes and 11 Themes.

3.1. Outcome 1: "By 2019, Iran's wetlands are better managed through upscaling successful ecosystem-based approaches and applying new tools"

Outcome 1 will ensure that Iran's wetlands are better managed through upscaling successful ecosystem-based approaches and applying new tools. In order to strengthen the evidence base for better wetland management and restoration, this outcome will also introduce and test three new economic tools, based on global best practice. These are: economic valuation of wetland ecosystem services; Payments for Ecosystem Services; and Cost-Benefit Analysis. These tools will assist decision makers to avoid costly mistakes particularly with regard to new infrastructure, but will also empower local communities and the public to engage more effectively in dialogues about their environment. Payments for ecosystem services offer an alternative to direct government financing to support sustainable wetland management.

The four themes of this Outcome are reflected in table 1:

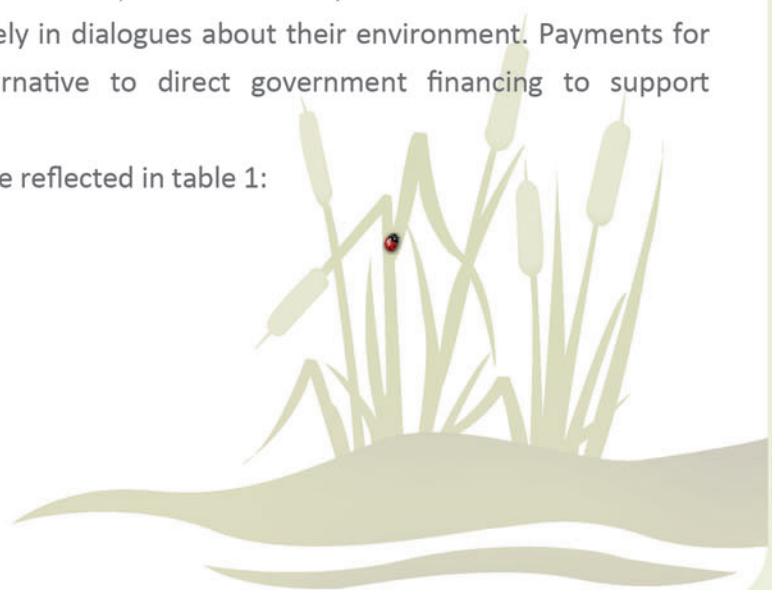


Table 1: OUTCOME ONE

Outcome 1	By 2019, Iran's wetlands are better managed through up scaling successful approaches and applying new tools.
Theme 1.1	Up-scaling ecosystem-based wetland management approaches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity building for integrated management - Integrated management plans for key wetlands - New management planning guidelines
Theme 1.2	Economic valuation of wetland ecosystem services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Testing methodologies for a variety of wetland habitat types - Landmark publication and outreach materials - New guideline for replication
Theme 1.3	Testing Payments for Ecosystem Services and Cost-benefit analysis for wetlands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feasibility study for wetland PES and guideline - CBA tool developed, tested and guideline produced.
Theme 1.4	Community-based wetland management for livelihoods and biodiversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vulnerability assessments and livelihood development plans - Capacity development for CBOs and NGOs - More sustainable existing livelihoods and alternative livelihoods piloted

3.2. Outcome 2: “By 2019, plans and policies affecting wetlands incorporate ecosystem-based approaches to support sustainable development, biodiversity, climate adaptation and human security”

Over the past five years CIWP has made major efforts to develop and accordingly approve a new act on the conservation of wetlands through hard lobbying the parliamentarians. It is envisioned that the act will be approved by the parliament and Cabinet shortly.

The Act covers the procedures and principles concerning the conservation and wise use of wetlands and the related habitats, the management of wetlands, and the establishment of a National Wetland Commission within the scope of the Ramsar Convention.

The endorsement by Cabinet of a new Act on the Conservation of Wetlands will provide along-awaited opportunity to address some of the key issues affecting wetlands.

However, in order to make the most of this new opportunity, it will be necessary to operationalise this new Act, through establishing and building the capacity of the required institutional structures, and preparing prioritized work-programmes. Furthermore, there is an urgent need to review existing national level policies and plans to ensure that they are consistent with the new Act.

Outcome two seeks to pursue different themes to achieve improved policies and plans. Table 2 presents more details on Outcome 2 and relative themes.

Table 2: OUTCOME TWO

Outcome 2	By 2019, improved plans and policies incorporate wetland ecosystems to support sustainable development, climate adaptation and human security
Theme 2.1	Operationalising Iran's new act on the Conservation of Wetlands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of National Wetland Committee and Secretariat - Adoption of National Wetland Conservation Strategy and Action Plan - Development of M&E tools
Theme 2.2	Wetland-friendly development policies and plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revision of national sectoral policies and provincial development plans
Theme 2.3	Master Plan for the conservation of Iran's Ramsar sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vulnerability assessment and threats analysis - Master plan for 24 Ramsar sites and individual action plans - Advocacy for implementation
Theme 2.4	Reducing the impacts of water infrastructure on wetlands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International conference on sustainable dams - New guidelines for dam management and their application - Capacity building of water engineers, dam managers, consulting companies
Theme 2.5	Demonstrating sustainable land planning and management in priority wetland basins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable land management plans - Implementation of sustainable agriculture and land management - Innovative financing mechanisms

3.3. Outcome3: “By 2019, Iran’s wetlands are benefiting from increased public participation, awareness and knowledge”

Increasing urbanization has meant that the public is disengaged from the issues of natural resource management and the critical need to maintain the life-support mechanisms that are provided by functioning ecosystems, particularly wetlands. There is therefore a great need to raise public awareness, so that the public become strong advocates for the policies and decisions. This issue has been recognized as a top priority by the Ramsar Convention on Outcome, CIWP will use the “Communications, Education, Participation and Awareness” (CEPA) toolkit provided by the Convention to implement a strategic approach to raising public awareness and national, provincial and local levels.



Special efforts will be required to raise the awareness of wetland dependent communities, and to provide platforms for them to participate in dialogues concerning issues affecting their wetlands. In this respect, Outcome 3 ensures Iran’s wetlands are benefiting from increased public participation, support and knowledge. Table 3 presents more details on Outcome 3 and relative themes.

Table 3: OUTCOME THREE

Outcome 3	By 2019, Iran’s wetlands are benefiting from increased public participation, support and knowledge
Theme 3.1	Raising public support for wetland conservation <ul style="list-style-type: none">- CEPA plans at national, provincial and local levels- Implementation of CEPA plans- Public engagement in dialogues concerning wetlands
Theme 3.2	State of Iran’s Wetlands Report <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Analysis of current status and recent trends- High profile launch and targeted outreach to decision-makers

4. Coordination and Resource Mobilization

4.1. National Coordination

The Project Steering Committee (PSC) as the highest decision-making structure of the project was created to provide overall guidance and support to the implementation of CIWP activities and consequently the 5-year strategy, 2015-19. The PSC comprises representatives of DoE (chair), MoE, MFA, MPA and UNDP. The main responsibilities of the PSC representatives continue to include a) to support the cross-sectoral approach of the project by creating mechanisms for interaction with NGOs and other stakeholders, b) to seek additional funding to support the outputs and activities of the project beyond the lifespan of GEF funding and, c) to provide strategic direction on the work plan.

Upon endorsement of the new CIWP strategy by the PSC in January 2015, a Resource Development Plan was developed to assist UNDP and DOE, to secure the national/international resources required to deliver CIWP's Strategy. In this respect, aiming to ensure excellent coordination between UNDP, DOE and the CIWP, a Resource Development Task Force (RDTF) including NPD, NPM and UNDP respective authority will lead the process of resource development. The Task Force is the responsible body to oversee development and implementation of the Resource Development Plan, to prioritize and approve the list of donors to be approached, to advise on the coordination of fundraising and the management of donor relations, to approve the list of prioritized activities and related concept notes and, to report to the CIWP PSC on progress and issues.

4.2. Resource mobilization

The Resource Development Plan which is drawn from the CIWP Strategy serves as a framework for coordination and fundraising at both national and international level. The main components of the plan include defining the funding required, identifying the potential sources for funds, developing partnership with non-traditional donors as well as setting out the strategy for fundraising and identifying roles, responsibilities and next steps.

The total expected financial requirements for the Project portfolio are estimated at USD 8,398,000 million. Please refer to annex I for a consolidated budget table per activities.

Fund-raising Modality

To date, UNDP has acted as the vehicle through which international funds are channelled to CIWP, while the DOE secures and manages the national co-financing budgets that are used

to support implementation activities. As such, UNDP takes responsibility for overseeing and coordinating the international fundraising. It is noteworthy that, the UNDP/CIWP nominated task force will maintain a register of all communications with donors, and the results. Necessary follow-up activities, such as drafting of full project proposals, will be followed-up as the basis for development of a contract between UNDP and the donor.

The fund-mobilisation mechanism described below presents the steps through which potential donors can support Iranian wetlands by earmarking budget for implementation of the CIWP seven prioritized activities:

Potential donors will be invited to participate in a field visit following a briefing session. The aim of these events is to familiarise them with the environmental challenges in Iran and particularly the role of conservation of wetlands in the socio-economic wellbeing of the communities and biodiversity that depend on these remarkable ecosystems. During the briefing session, the developed project portfolio document including the 7 prioritized concept notes, will be presented to the representatives of donors. The flowchart below illustrates the fund-raising modality:



5. Measuring Progress

The projects progress will be measured through the following mechanism:

5.1. Monitoring and evaluation

The Resource Development Task Force is the responsible body to oversee development and implementation of the prioritized projects under the portfolio of the projects. It will devise a mechanism for the regular monitoring of the projects. Monitoring of both project activities and finances will be carried according to donor requirements with activity and output monitoring conducted regularly.

Monitoring activities include but will not be limited to the task force, in the sense that implementing partners will also need to conduct impact monitoring to portray the results and impacts of the project on the wetland ecosystems, socio-economic wellbeing of the communities and biodiversity.

5.2. Reporting

All donor reporting requirements, as stipulated in the respective donor agreements, will be fundamental to the project success measurement. The Task force, in its coordination capacity, will provide guidance and technical support in project and report formulation, regardless of the funding modality.

The reports on the progress of the activities and expenditure need to be provided as follows:

- Mid-year progress reports;
- Annual progress reports; and
- Final reports, to be provided no later than three months after the completion of activities. The final reports will give a summary of results as well as a comparison of these achievements with project goals and objectives.

The task force is responsible for ensuring that expenditure validity is compatible with project timeframes, and that allocated funds are utilized in accordance with all financial rules and regulations as stipulated in donor contracts.

5.3. Visibility

In consultation with the donors and in coordination with DoE, every project fully or partially funded by the donors, will be promoted clearly indicating donor's name and country whenever appropriate, in the project sites. The visibility of the generous contribution from the donors will be promoted through press releases both in English and Farsi; web stories will be published on CIWP/UNDP websites. The costs of providing the visibility are incorporated in the activity modules.

Also, additional efforts will be made to strengthen donor relations through different events and forums. For instance, field visits will be organized with the presence of donors' representatives such as the focal points of the respective Embassies and other national and international donors.



Hamoun Wetland



Qeshm Island, Mangrove Forests



Shadegan Wetland



Hamoun Wetland



PART II:

Summary of Project Concept Notes



PART II: SUMMARY OF PROJECT CONCEPT NOTES

This section provides an overview of the proposed projects endorsed by the Resource Development Task Force. It is a consolidation of the projects proposed by CIWP as a key Iranian actor in the area of wetlands conservation, and includes information on prioritized activities and financial requirements. Within the overall framework of the CIWP strategy, the proposed projects aim to improve the condition of Iran's wetland ecosystem as measured by area, livelihoods and biodiversity. The proposed projects have been designed in line with the three outcomes of the CIWP Strategy.

Project concept Note 1: Capacity development for local communities near major wetlands to shift from non-sustainable agriculture to sustainable livelihoods, through an “Eco-villages” approach

Project concept Note 2: A joint capacity-building program with the Ministry of Energy concerning wetland - friendly/sustainable water infrastructure design and management, including demonstration activities to secure the required water flow for one sample wetland.

Project concept Note 3: Assessment of the role of wetland degradation in Iran on air pollution by dust particles, and the development of feasible mitigation methods through integrated/better wetland management

Project concept Note 4: A national awareness raising campaign on wetland conservation, socio-economic benefits of wetlands and better water management

Project concept Note 5: Introduction and demonstration of business planning for wetland protected areas to support more effective wetland management

Project concept Note 6: Assessment and valuation of wetland ecosystem services and identification of feasible Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) schemes to secure innovative financing for sustainable wetland management

Project concept Note 7: Conservation of Iran's 24 Ramsar sites: vulnerability assessment and targeted action programme



Hormozgan, Minab Mangrove Wetland



Choghakhor wetland

Project Concept Note

1. Project Title

Capacity development for local communities near major wetlands to shift from non-sustainable agriculture to sustainable livelihoods, through an “Eco-villages” approach.

2. Total Requested Amount for implementing the activity

Indicative budget requested

USD 600,000 (Estimated budget for implementing the project around one wetlands – budget could be increased to tackle additional wetlands)

The generous contribution of donors will in particular help to reduce the pressure on water resources through application of environmentally friendly livelihood approach in the wetland basin, in accordance to ecosystem approach in wetland management. Government co-financing will be made available to support implementation.

3. Implementation Period and main partners

3 years (Minimum duration for implementing the project around one of the proposed wetlands)

Department of Environment, Local communities and NGOs around the wetlands, Provincial and District Governors, Provincial Water Authorities, Provincial Agriculture Organisations, Ministry of Energy

4. Social, environmental and economic Results

Results	Means of Assessment
1. 100 farmers/fruit-growers living in 10 pilot (eco) villages adopt environmentally-friendly farming / alternative livelihoods leading to a considerable water saving.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The number of farmers participated in the technical and vocational training courses,- The number of farmers practised environmentally friendly farming / alternative livelihoods- Annual reports on the cubic meters of water saved
2. Local network established to promote environmentally friendly agriculture\ alternative livelihood in the basin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Activity reports of local network

5. Short Summary of current situation

Challenges in the management of Iran’s wetlands have been exacerbated by uncontrolled increase of cultivated areas, unsustainable use of water resources, persistent droughts and climate changes. These combined impacts have led to considerable shrinkage of wetlands, and in some parts of the country major wetlands are entirely dry, with serious impacts on biodiversity and the livelihood of local communities. Recognising that the agriculture sector consumes more than 87% of the country’s water with a rather low efficiency rate, there is an urgent need to promote environmentally friendly agriculture and sustainable livelihoods in key basins to allow more water to discharge to the wetlands. It is also worth to note that the candidate wetlands in this concept note, Lake Hamoun, Shadegan, and Zarivar wetlands are considered as the top priority Iranian wetlands/Lakes in term of the role which they play on biodiversity and ecosystem goods and services, as well as huge number of beneficiaries benefiting from them including farmers and fruit-growers living in their basins.

6. Key area of activities

- Participatory vulnerability and opportunity assessments for sustainable agriculture / livelihoods development in selected wetland-dependent communities, including participatory GIS, building on local knowledge
- Status of biodiversity and critical habitats important for livelihoods support assessed, and related livelihood values identified together with local stakeholders.
- Participatory development of sustainable livelihood improvement plans at community level (existing and alternative livelihoods), including agreements on resource sharing, zoning, biodiversity restoration measures etc.
- Ensure alignment with local and provincial development planning
- Establishment and capacity development of community livelihood groups, cooperatives etc. with appropriate governance mechanisms (including traditional ones)
- On the job training of at least 10 (young) local champions from each community, to be leaders for sustainability, and to engage in higher level development dialogues
- Training on community based natural resources management for representatives from government, NGOs etc.
- Identification/establishment of innovative financing mechanisms for sustainable livelihoods through micro-credits and PES etc.
- Development of M&E mechanisms, including indicators for prioritization of conservation measures and sustainable livelihoods interventions with local stakeholders
- Advocacy, communications and awareness raising on the critical links between wetland biodiversity, ecosystems and livelihoods
- Raising the awareness of wetland communities so that they can engage effectively in dialogues on these issues

7. Justification – Unpredictability & Urgency

The proposed wetlands in particular the Hamoun Wetlands have all suffered severe restriction of water inflows and (in the first two cases) major infrastructure developments, causing dramatic loss of biodiversity and ecosystem goods and services, as well as severe dust storms. These have had devastating consequences for many local communities who have lost their livelihoods. These, and other, problems are mirrored in many smaller wetlands around the country. This project strives to ensure that capacity development of the wetland-dependent communities alleviates this dependency and facilitate access to secure incomes through sustainable alternative livelihoods programmes.

Project Concept Note

1. Project Title

A joint capacity-building program with the Ministry of Energy concerning wetland-friendly/sustainable water infrastructure design and management, including demonstration activities to secure the required water flow for one sample wetland.

2. Total Requested Amount for implementing the activity

Indicative budget requested

USD 700,000 (Estimated budget for implementing the project around one wetland – budget could be increased to tackle additional wetlands)

Donor support to this project will enable international best practices to be introduced to the planning and management of Iran's water infrastructure, particularly dams – which are a major causes of wetland degradation.

Government co-financing will be made available for implementation and up-scaling.

3. Implementation Period and main partners

4 years

Department of Environment, Ministry of Energy, Provincial Water authorities, NGOs and water users

4. Social, environmental and economic Results

Results	Means of Assessment
1. Assessment of water infrastructures and their impacts on wetlands	- Water infrastructure report
2. Introduction of best practices, capacity development of water infrastructure designers and managers	- Capacity development scorecards - Training workshop reports - International best practice workshop
3. More sustainable water management in wetland basin	- Signed agreement between the water authority in the basin and DOE on water right for the wetland - Allocated water right to the wetland based on the mutual agreement
3. Mechanisms for up-scaling	- Approved new guidelines for dam / water infrastructure management and their application - Disseminated a large number of technical tools, guidelines and publications

5. Short Summary of current situation

The proposed wetlands for this project would be either Helleh wetland or the AjiGol, AlmaGol and AlaGol Ramsar site. Both wetlands encountered problems including: upstream dam construction, increase of agricultural activities in the basin, reduction of surface of the wetland, and disappearance of habitats.

Helleh wetland is a coastal wetland located in the north of Persian Gulf in Bushehr province with an area of 42,600 ha. It is located 10 kilometers far from the coast where close to 700,000 people livelihoods depend directly and indirectly to the restoration of the wetland. The wetland is formed through confluence of the Dalaki and Shapour rivers which creates suitable habitats especially for birds.

The AjiGol, AlmaGol and AlaGol Ramsar site is located in the dry steppe and warm Turkman sahra desert, near to the border of Iran and Turkmenistan. These wetlands include unique ecosystems for Iran. The number of beneficiaries residing the villages around the wetland is estimated to be 400,000 people.

Many changes in land use of both wetlands basins has resulted from reduction of wetlands' area, and changes in the vegetation communities. These changes have been originated from several issues such as droughts, dam construction, additional water consumption in agriculture, fish farming and construction of canals and roads.

6. Key area of activities

- 🔴 Review of existing water infrastructure and operational guidelines in selected wetland basins
- 🔴 Assessment of impacts of water infrastructure on wetlands
- 🔴 Scenario analysis for the operation of key water infrastructure in selected wetland basin
- 🔴 Development of best practice guidelines and tools for planning, design, construction and operation of dams and other water infrastructure to maintain/restore living wetlands
- 🔴 Participatory assessments of water regime needs of selected wetlands, and preparation of response plans
- 🔴 Introduction of international best practices in sustainable water infrastructure, including an international conference.
- 🔴 Capacity development of water engineers, dam managers and consulting firms
- 🔴 Advice and advocacy for changes to the design and operation of key water infrastructure
- 🔴 Development of decision-support tools to assist managers and policy-makers to assess the impacts of changes in water management on water availability and demand
- 🔴 Preparation of a guideline on sustainable water infrastructure
- 🔴 Raising the awareness of wetland communities so that they can engage effectively in dialogues on these issues.

7. Justification – Unpredictability & Urgency

CIWP has already provided guidelines to determine the water requirements of wetlands, with a particular focus on lakes and floodplain wetlands and deltas. Nevertheless, there is still an urgent need to address both the operation of existing infrastructure and the design of new infrastructure to create more sustainable and 'multi-functional' water management systems that will help secure the hydrological regime thresholds for wetlands. Hence, the implementation of the project is of paramount importance as it aims to develop and operationalise key tools and approaches for water infrastructure management that are underpinned by an ecosystem approach to support better management of these wetlands. Most importantly, the project would be undertaken closely with the Ministry of Energy and the provincial water authorities and their consulting firms. The tangible outcomes of the project implementation could be summarized as a) establishment of new sustainable water infrastructure approach and program, b) protection of habitats and restoration of wetlands, c) re-establishment of wetland-dependent community livelihoods.

Project Concept Note

1. Project Title

Assessment of the role of wetland degradation in Iran on air pollution by dust particles, and the development of feasible mitigation methods through integrated/better wetland management

2. Total Requested Amount for implementing the activity

Indicative budget requested

Hamoun wetlands(in the Southeastern provinces): **USD 1,200,000**

Mesopotamian Marshes(in the Southwestern provinces): **USD 2,500,000**

Donor support will assist the Iranian cabinet in this humanitarian and environmental protection project which seeks to address the problem of extreme air pollution caused by dust particles from degraded wetland areas along shared borders with neighboring countries, Iraq and Afghanistan. Any contribution to the mitigation of dust storm would have direct positive impacts on the health and socio-economic wellbeing of millions of people. Government co-financing will be made available for implementation.

3. Implementation Period and main partners

3 years

Department of Environment, Local communities and NGOs around the wetlands, Provincial and District Governors, Provincial Water Authorities, Provincial Agriculture Organisations, Ministry of Energy

4. Social, environmental and economic Results

Results	Means of Assessment
1. Assessment of role of wetland degradation in producing sand and dust storms, and options analysis for remediation measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comprehensive report - Endorsement of the report by DoE - Stakeholder workshops
2. Capacity building of basin managers such as water engineers and dam managers, agricultural extension officers and NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - # of workshops, international conference - Technical assistance received through consulting with technical expert in the area of dust storm mitigation and benefiting from international best practices
3. Implementation of mitigation measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International working group formed - A master plan developed to portray the wetland dust source points and planning for restoring these areas - Action plan designed and implemented

5. Short Summary of current situation

Hamoun wetland:

The Hamoun wetlands in the Sistan basin of SW Afghanistan and SE Iran have been functioning as a vital life support system in an extremely arid desert region for humans and wildlife for millennia. They are designated under the Ramsar Convention. These wetlands provide a habitat for globally significant biodiversity and vital support for sustaining the local economy and for regulating the micro-climate of the region.

In recent decades, human activities have severely degraded the natural environment in the basin. The most drastic drought conditions in living memory commenced in 1998 and have lasted at least 14 years. During this period, major parts of the Lakes have become completely dry and natural and human life has been threatened on a large scale. In normal years when the Hamoun Lakes have water they serve as a cooling system during the hot, dry summers and add some freshness to the harsh climate. However, when the Lakes are dry, the 120-day winds erode sand, silt and clay from the dry lake beds and spread it over the region. Sand particles create sand dunes and bury houses while silt and clay particles send dust into the air, causing respiratory and optical infections. Due to the dryness of Hamoun Lakes and the removal of the vegetation cover, these seasonal winds have increased both in duration and speed. In 2004, for example, the seasonal winds lasted for 230 days and their maximum speed exceeded 120km/h. Unfortunately at the moment almost the entire area of wetlands have been dried and are a source of severe dust storms.

Mesopotamian Marshland:

The tragic loss of the Mesopotamian marshlands (shared by Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey at basin level) stands out as one of the world's greatest environmental disasters. Dams and drainage schemes have transformed one of the finest wetlands, the fabled Eden of the Fertile Crescent that has inspired humanity for millennia, into salt encrusted desert. The ecological life-support system of a distinct indigenous people dwelling in a rare water-world of dense reed beds and teeming wildlife has collapsed. Humanity's impact on the planet's fragile ecosystems could not be more dramatically illustrated.

The demise of the Mesopotamian marshlands is part of an underlying hydrologic catchment problem: growing demands on the dwindling water supplies of the Tigris-Euphrates basin. One of the most important impacts of development is that it has substantially reduced the water supply and effectively eliminated the flood pulses that sustained wetland ecosystems in the lower basin.

The Mesopotamian marshlands, which until recently extended over an original area of 15,000 – 20,000 km², have been devastated by the combined impact of massive drainage works implemented in southern Iraq in the late 1980s/early 1990s and upstream damming. The Central and Al Hammar marshlands have completely collapsed with respectively 97% and 94% of their land cover transformed into bare land and salt crusts, while less than a third of the trans-boundary Hawr Al Azim remains. Now there are extensive areas of degraded/dry wetlands providing multiple point sources for dust storms from bed of the Mesopotamian marshlands. Identification of these dust storm sources and finding solutions to reduce these natural hazards are a top priority for the Government.

6. Key area of activities

The proposed programme will focus on the Iranian parts of these shared wetlands, but will also involve components of information-sharing, joint capacity building for trans-boundary restoration actions with neighboring countries.

- Establish task forces with presence of government organizations, NGOs, international advisors
- Conduct root-cause analyses to identify the main source of fine dust particles in the south western and southeastern province of Iran and developing integrated and comprehensive plans for reduction of fine dust particles
- Identify and test potential solutions and incorporate into the existing management plans of the two wetlands developed for the wetland basins and make necessary changes, if applicable
- Conduct participatory assessment of the proposed solutions
- Provision of any support for Implementation of the action plan through beneficiaries empowerment to immediately tackle the sources of fine dust particles
- Raising the awareness of wetland communities so that they can engage effectively in dialogues on these issues

7. Justification – Unpredictability & Urgency

Sistan/Baluchestan and Khuzestan provinces are the country's most vulnerable provinces to climate change in Iran, i.e., they face a unique set of environmental degradation and increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events especially sand and dust storms. Sand and dust storms cause great economic losses and harsh effect on the health of wetland-dependent communities. It is said that sand and dust storms causes long-term health effects such to the kidney, brain, liver, heart, and numerous other systems. About 300,000 people (in Iran and Afghanistan) live around Hamoun Wetlands and their socio-economic wellbeing is directly affected by the dust storms. This is also true for the 12 million people who directly and indirectly suffer from dusts arising from the Mesopotamian Marshlands in Iran (mostly affected in Khuzestan province), Iraq, Kuwait, and even other countries.

As such, there is a critical need for best practice technical support to develop targeted actions for each wetland based on a participatory vulnerability assessment, and to build capacity for addressing these problems through empowerment of beneficiaries.



Lake Urmia



Kaniberazan Wetland

Project Concept Note

1. Project Title

A national awareness raising campaign on wetland conservation, socio-economic benefits of wetlands and better water management

2. Total Requested Amount for implementing the activity

Indicative budget requested

USD 1,500,000

The donor contribution to this project is required for a major public awareness campaign to promote civil society support for international best practices in wetland conservation and management. It will help to change public attitudes and behavior regarding wetlands and water resources, increasing the level of understanding of the public on socio-economic benefits of wetlands, incorporate wetland issues into the political public agenda, and engage high-ranking decision makers and opinion leaders in wetland related issues. Government co-financing will be made available for implementation.

3. Implementation Period and main partners

2 years

Department of Environment, Local communities and NGOs active in awareness-raising, Media, Provincial and District Governors, Provincial Water Authorities, Provincial Agriculture Organisations, Ministry of Energy

4. Social, environmental and economic Results

Results	Means of Assessment
1. Level of public awareness raised by 15%	- Pre and post- assessment through a variety means of survey methodologies including questionnaires, interviews, etc
2. An awareness-raising campaign conducted at country level with participation of at least 1500 national community	- # of NGOs actively engaged in awareness-raising campaign - # of "Champions" (eg actors, musicians and athletes) engaged in the campaign - # of media events
3. Media coverage of State of Iran's Wetlands	- At least 4 press conference is held - At least 10 TV/radio programs are broadcast - # of articles in national papers
4. A national CEPA (Communications, Education, Participation and Awareness) plan for wetlands	- Development of wetlands CEPA plan - Endorsement of the CEPA plan by DoE and respective stakeholders - Submission of the plan to Ramsar Covention Secretariat

5. Short Summary of current situation

Decisions that affect wetlands will only be made wisely if they take full account of the needs and concerns of the communities that will be affected, and are supported by the general public. This project will focus on developing and implementing programmes to raise public awareness, in particular among NGOs, religious and social leaders, teachers, students, women, community champions about wetlands – their values, threats and conservation needs - and to provide new opportunities for communities to engage in key dialogues about developments that affect wetlands.

Increasing urbanization has disengaged the public from the issues of natural resource management and the critical need to maintain the life-support mechanisms that are provided by functioning ecosystems, particularly wetlands. There is therefore a great need to raise public awareness, so that the public become strong advocates for wise policies and decisions.

6. Key area of activities

- 🐞 Prepare and launch of implementation phase a CEPA (Communications, Education, Participation and Awareness) plan for wetlands at national level, as well as in priority provinces, and for priority wetlands.
- 🐞 Run targeted awareness campaigns on wetland values and water saving, particularly for the agriculture sector
- 🐞 Establish web-based platforms and SMS/social media networks to engage wetland communities and stakeholders in water dialogues, knowledge and tools
- 🐞 Build capacity of wetland-related civil society organizations to communicate and advocate on issues related to water resource planning and management
- 🐞 Support existing wetland-related user platforms (e.g. village Islamic councils, farmer cooperatives, fishing cooperatives) to engage in water dialogues (through meetings, exchanges, travel support for engagement with key government actors)
- 🐞 Media training on wetland conservation
- 🐞 Production of a documentary on water sharing and wetlands
- 🐞 Support to civil society partners, and organization in radio debates on wetlands and water sharing between sectors during World Wetlands Day and World Water Week
- 🐞 Raising the awareness of wetland communities so that they can engage effectively in dialogues on these issues

7. Justification – Unpredictability & Urgency

The scale of wetland loss and degradation in recent decades in Iran has been alarming. Measures to conserve wetlands will only be successful if they are supported by the public – both those who depend on those wetlands, and the public in general. Environmental considerations have become to one of critical issues for both the community that being affected and the government officials. As such, raising the public awareness more effectively is key to enhancing wetland conservation and management. During recent years there has been several awareness raising activities on wetlands-related issues including festivals, workshop, campaigns etc. Public polls indicated that the level of people's awareness is higher in the areas where the activities had been carried out. However, there remains an urgent need for activities which can raise public awareness across the country, so that every single Iranian will support wetland conservation and wise water management activities more effectively. This can only be achieved through a targeted high profile campaign.

Project Concept Note

1. Project Title

Introduction and demonstration of business planning for wetland protected areas to support more effective wetland management

2. Total Requested Amount for implementing the activity

Indicative budget requested

USD 730,000

Donors will assist the government to introduce international best practices in business planning for wetland protected areas. This will complement existing ecosystem-based management, to secure more effective wetland conservation. Government co-financing will be made available for implementation and up-scaling.

3. Implementation Period and main partners

3 years

Department of Environment, Local communities and NGOs around the wetlands, Provincial and District Governors, MOJA, Water Authority

4. Social, environmental and economic Results

Results	Means of Assessment
1. Business plan developed for one national wetland protected area	- Approved Business plan for Zarivar wetland
2. Ensuring the implementation of the Business plan by respective stakeholders	- Progress on Business Plan implementation
3. Improved protected areas management (budgeting, resource use efficiency, marketing, financing, communications)	- Improvements against baseline
4. National guideline on developing Business plan	- Approved guideline

5. Short Summary of current situation

The proposed wetland protected area for piloting business planning is: Zarivar Lake in Kurdistan Province, a spring-fed freshwater wetland located along the Zarivar river, and supports a rich biodiversity. Due to the relatively wide range of reed beds, it has made one of the major places for overwintering of the northern migratory birds. This aquatic ecosystem has endemic fauna and flora and 70% of its water is supplied by the spontaneous springs at the lake bed. Participatory integrated management plans have been widely introduced by CIWP for the management of biodiversity and human activities in wetland protected areas in Iran. However, there is a great need to build the capacity of the wetland protected area managers to accompany these with better budgeting, more efficient management of human and financial resources, better marketing and awareness and more diverse funding of the protected areas. Capacity, tools and guidelines for such systems need to be piloted and demonstrated for up-scaling across the country. Designing a comprehensive business plan for this protected area therefore could be considered as a complementary tool for management plans developed for this wetland ensuring that an appropriate programme of work and effective monitoring is in place.

6. Key area of activities

- 🐞 Reviewing international approaches for protected area business planning and adapting for the Iranian situation
- 🐞 Piloting business planning at one protected areas including:
 - Improved budgeting to deliver conservation outcomes
 - Improved management of human resources
 - Improved marketing and communications
 - Developing strategies for obtaining new funding sources.
- 🐞 Adoption of the business plan
- 🐞 Development and adoption of a guideline for business planning to be applied for all wetland protected areas
- 🐞 Capacity development for business planning among protected area managers
- 🐞 Raising the awareness of wetland communities so that they can engage effectively in dialogues on these issues

7. Justification – Unpredictability & Urgency

The current national systems of protected areas are not sufficiently well-managed or resourced to maximize their contribution to biodiversity conservation and human development objectives. There is an urgent need to develop a more business-oriented approach to the management of these critically important areas, to ensure the best use of available resources. By piloting this approach and building capacity, more effective wetland management will be assured across the country.

Any financial support to this project will assist CIWP in establishing national programmes of work on one of the national wetland protected area, Zarivar wetland, with targeted goals, actions, specific actors, time frame, inputs and expected measurable outputs. In addition, it will enable CIWP to benefit from appropriate technologies, source of finance and technical cooperation, and to ensure, through appropriate actions, the means to meet the particular challenges and demands of their protected areas. Government co-financing will be made available for implementation.

Project Concept Note

1. Project Title

Assessment and valuation of wetland ecosystem services and identification of feasible Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) schemes to secure innovative financing for sustainable wetland management.

2. Total Requested Amount for implementing the activity

Indicative budget requested

USD 768,000 (Estimated budget for implementing the project in one of the proposed wetlands budget could be increased to tackle additional wetlands)

Donors will allow best practice approaches to be piloted to: a) conduct assessment and valuation of wetland ecosystem services; b) to identify options for Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) schemes as potential funding mechanisms for better wetland management; c) to pilot implementation of one innovative PES scheme. This will contribute to better management of wetlands at basin level. Government co-financing will be made available for implementation and scale-up of successful approaches.

3. Implementation Period and main partners

3 years (Minimum duration for implementing the project)

Department of Environment, Local communities and NGOs around the wetlands, Provincial and District Governors, Provincial Water Authorities, Provincial Agriculture Organisations, Ministry of Energy, Universities

4. Social, environmental and economic Results

Results	Means of Assessment
1. Innovative tools for assessment and valuation of wetland ecosystem services	- A landmark report summarising the methodologies and application in one wetland - Manuals/guideline for outreach and upscaling
2. PES options assessed and one option piloted to support better wetland management	- Prioritised PES options report - PES pilot report - Fund raised and applied to better wetland management - PES manual and guideline for wetlands
3. Local community around wetland (300 individuals- 1500 households) benefit from PES scheme	- Household surveys from baseline
4. Threat reduction to wetland	- Reports e.g. of water savings

5. Short Summary of current situation

Although significant progress has been made in introducing the concept of ecosystem based management to Iranian wetlands, there is still a challenge in convincing decision-makers and the public of their values, and of assessing the costs and consequences of unsustainable developments. There is a few methodology or guideline for assessing and valuing the ecosystem services provided by wetlands in Iran.

Funding for wetland conservation and management (excluding environmental crises) in Iran is almost entirely derived either from the budgets of the Department of Environment, or from international donors. However, many other sectors either benefit from or impact wetlands (for example the water and agriculture sectors). In many other parts of the world, Payments for Ecosystem Services schemes have been successfully developed to ensure that these sectors also contribute to sustainable wetland management. There is no experience of such systems in Iran, and no methodologies or guidelines.

The proposed wetland for piloting these approaches would be one of the following: Gori-Gol, Kani-Berazan, Lake Parishan or Zarivar wetlands.

6. Key area of activities

- 🐞 Reviewing international best practice approaches to assessment and valuation of ecosystem services and PES;
- 🐞 Assessing/valuing the ecosystem services and PES baseline of pilot site;
- 🐞 Determining marketable ecosystem services and potential buyers and sellers;
- 🐞 Reviewing and developing guidelines and mechanisms for PES, evaluating and negotiating potential PES agreements;
- 🐞 Implementing pilot schemes including:
 - Introducing methods to Local authorities & community to starting filed implementing
 - Capacity building of involvements
 - Implementing base on strategy plan
 - Make connection between buyers and sellers, marketing, also cost transaction
 - Sustaining of this modeling
- 🐞 Developing guideline and manuals for up-scaling and outreach
- 🐞 Project coordination, monitoring and evaluation
- 🐞 Documentation and publishing results
- 🐞 Raising the awareness of wetland communities so that they can engage effectively in dialogues on these issues

7. Justification – Unpredictability & Urgency

Monetary value is just one out of many reasons for conserving wetlands. Lack of knowledge and understanding of the value of wetlands ecosystem services is an important reason why many inappropriate development decisions are made in Iran. However, approaches for assessing and evaluating wetland ecosystem services are not formalized or demonstrated yet in Iran. Similarly, PES schemes have not yet been tested. CIWP will therefore draw on best global practices to support the development of a tool to assess the economic and other values of Iran's wetland ecosystem services and to develop PES schemes. This will help strengthen understanding of the links between the natural environment and society. It will also support better decision-making so that the costs of wetland loss and degradation can be factored into policies and plans, and will help justify and provide mechanisms for higher investments to protect wetland ecosystems.

Project Concept Note

1. Project Title

Conservation of Iran's 24 Ramsar sites: vulnerability assessment and targeted action programme

2. Total Requested Amount for implementing the activity

Indicative budget requested

USD 400,000

International donor support will enable completion of a vulnerability assessment and preparation of a prioritized action programme for each site, as well as capacity building according to international best practice. Government co-financing will be made available for implementation.

3. Implementation Period and main partners

3 years

Department of Environment, Local communities and NGOs around the Ramsar Sites, Provincial and District Governors, Provincial Water Authorities, Provincial Agriculture Organisations, Ministry of Energy and other related authorities

4. Social, environmental and economic Results

Results	Means of Assessment
1. Improved condition and threat reduction for Iran's 24 most important wetlandss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approved Master plan for Iran's Ramsar sites - Annual reports on implementation
2. Improved livelihood security and empowerment for several hundred thousand wetland dependent people living in and around Iran's 24 Ramsar sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduced vulnerability assessments - Communities participating in wetland governance
3. Reduced vulnerability for IUCN Red List threatened wetland species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implemented species actions - Results of annual monitoring

5. Short Summary of current situation

Twenty-four (24) of Iran's most important wetlands, totalling 1,486,438 hectares are designated as Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention. These wetlands support an amazingly rich biodiversity, and hundreds of thousands of people directly depend on their productivity for fisheries, livestock, agriculture and tourism. These Ramsar sites also indirectly provide critical goods and services to the people of Iran, such as water and food supply, control of dust-storms, and microclimate regulation. Despite these values, many of Iran's Ramsar sites are under severe threat from water resources developments, encroachment of natural habitats from agriculture and urban development, pollution and over-harvesting. Indeed, six are already on the Ramsar Convention's Montreux Record - a list of "sites where changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring, or are likely to occur as a result of technological developments or other human interference".

While the Department of Environment, the government agency responsible for wetlands, is working with other stakeholders to address urgent crises, there is still need to overview the current vulnerabilities facing Iran's Ramsar sites, and targeted programme to address the main threats.

6. Key area of activities

- 🕸 Vulnerability assessment conducted for all 24 Ramsar sites through participatory assessment with local communities and stakeholders.
- 🕸 Participatory identification of the management priorities to address specific vulnerabilities.
- 🕸 Master plan (compilation of 24 site assessments and action plans) for conservation and restoration of Iran's Ramsar sites prepared, approved for implementation and launched under the responsibility of the Department of Environment.
- 🕸 Action plans for each Ramsar site approved at provincial level, with budget allocated to/by provinces for implementation, including clear stakeholder responsibilities.
- 🕸 Capacity building support to provincial agencies and local communities for integrated management and conservation of Ramsar sites.
- 🕸 Advocacy for implementation of the master plan, by raising the capacity of NGOs and communities to engage in local and national dialogues to ensure that sectoral policies, plans and projects are in line with Ramsar site objectives.
- 🕸 M&E mechanisms established for monitoring implementation of the Master Plan, under the responsibility of the Department of Environment

7. Justification – Unpredictability & Urgency

The conservation of wetlands is recognized as an urgent priority for human security in Iran, both by UNDP and the Government. Consequences of inappropriate management (particularly of water) are already visible at many of Iran's wetlands. Livelihoods of wetland dependent communities, as well as globally significant biodiversity have already been severely impacted, and will continue to worsen unless the problems are addressed through more sustainable integrated management.

There is a critical need for best practice technical support to develop targeted actions for each Ramsar site based on a participatory vulnerability assessment, and to build capacity for integrated management and empowerment of communities.

Annex I: Summary Financial Requirement

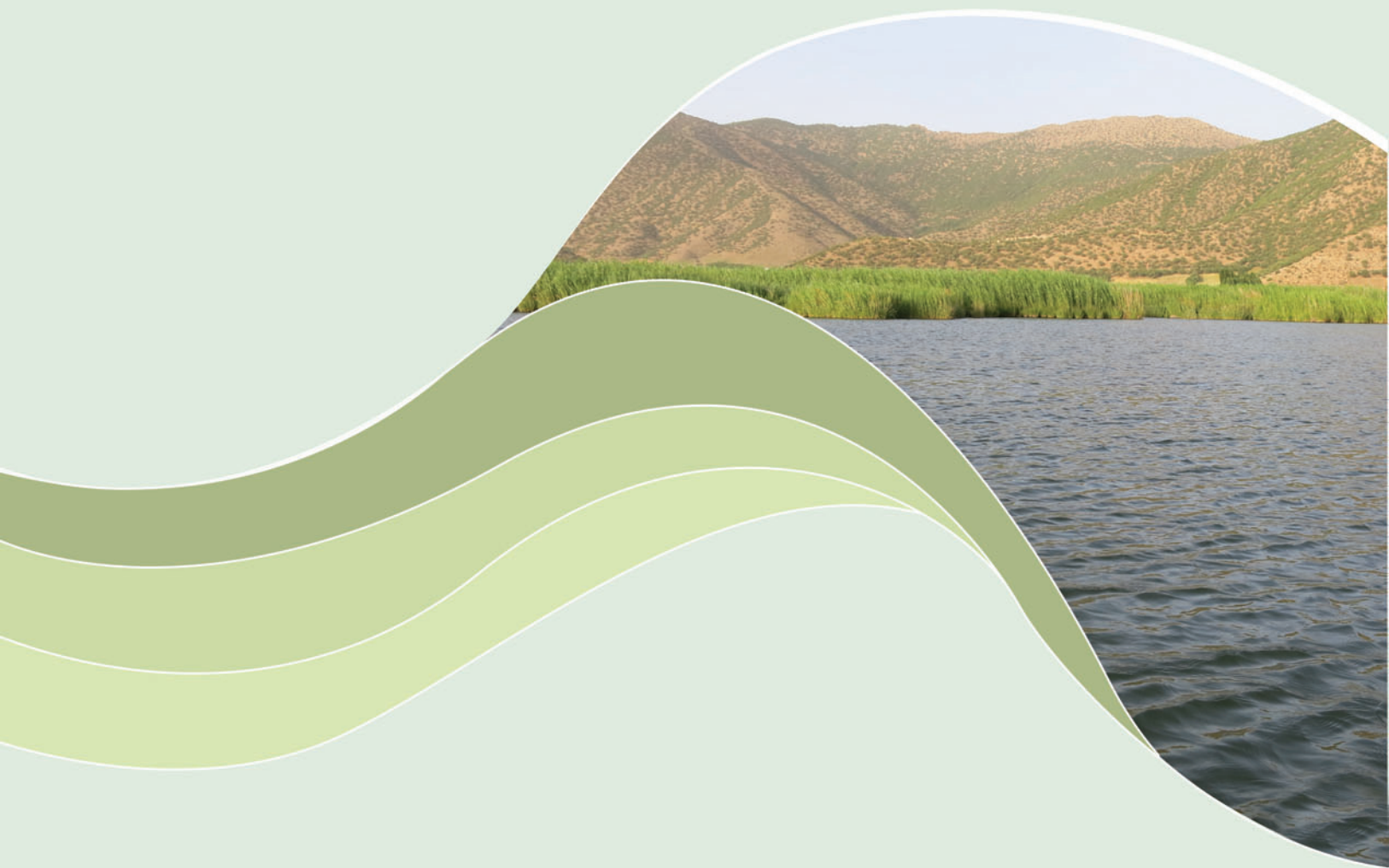
Projects	Indicative Budget	
	(USD)	(IRR)
Activity one: Capacity development for local communities near major wetlands to shift from non-sustainable agriculture to sustainable livelihoods, through an “Eco-villages” approach	600,000	16,200,000,000
Activity Two: A joint capacity-building program with the Ministry of Energy concerning wetland-friendly/sustainable water infrastructure design and management, including demonstration activities to secure the required water flow for one sample wetland	700,000	18,900,000,000
Activity Three: Assessment of the role of wetland degradation in Iran on air pollution by dust particles, and the development of feasible mitigation methods through integrated/better wetland management	3,700,000	99,900,000,000
Activity Four: A national awareness raising campaign on wetland conservation, socio-economic benefits of wetlands and better water management	1,500,000	40,500,000,000
Activity Five: Introduction and demonstration of business planning for wetland protected areas to support more effective wetland management	730,000	19,710,000,000
Activity Six: Assessment and valuation of wetland ecosystem services and identification of feasible Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) schemes to secure innovative financing for sustainable wetland management	768,000	20,736,000,000
Activity Seven: Conservation of Iran’s 24 Ramsar sites: vulnerability assessment and targeted action programme	400,000	10,800,000,000
Grand Total	8,398,000	226,746,000,000

Annex II: List of Ramsar sites

Sites	Province	Area(ha)
Alagol, Ulmagol and Ajigol Lakes (1)	Mazandaran	1,400
Amirkelayeh Lake (2)	Gilan	1,230
Anzali Mordab(Talab) complex (3)	Gilan	15,000
Bujagh National Park (4)	Gilan	3,177
Choghakhor Wetland (5)	Chahar Mahal and Bakhtiari	1,687
Deltas of Rud-e-Gaz and Rud-e-Hara (6)	Hormozgan	15,000
Deltas of Rud-e-Shur, Rud-e-Shirin and Rud-e-Minab (7)	Hormozgan	45,000
Fereydoon Kenar, Ezbaran& Sorkh Ruds Ab-Bandans (8)	Mazandaran	5,427
Gavkhouni Lake and marshes of the lower ZaindehRud (9)	Isfahan	43,000
Gomishan Lagoon (10)	Golestan	17,700
Govater Bay and Hur-e-Bahu (11)	Baluchestan	75,000
Hamun-e-puzak, south end (12)	Sistan & Baluchestan	10,000
Hamun-e-Saberi&HamIm-e-Helmand (13)	Sistan & Baluchestan	50,000
Kanibarazan Wetland (14)	Azərbayjan-e Gharbi	927
Khuran Straits (15)	Hormozgan	100,000
Lake Gori (16)	Azərbayjan-e Sharqi	120
Lake Kobi (17)	Azərbayjan-e Gharbi	1,200
Lake Urmia (18)	Azərbayjan-e Gharbi	483,000
Lake Parishan & Dasht-e-Arjan (19)	Fars	6,200
Miankaleh Peninsula, Gorgan Bay and Lapoo-Zaghmarz Ab-bandan (20)	Mazandaran	100,000
Neyriz Lake & Kamjan Marshes (21)	Fars	108,000
Shadegan Marshes & mudflats of Khor-al Amaya & khor Musa (22)	Khuzestan	400,000
Sheedvar Island (23)	Hormozgan	870
Shurgol, Yadegarlu & Dorgeh Sangi Lakes (24)	Azərbayjan-e Gharbi	2,500

Iranian Wetlands Recorded in Ramsar Convention





Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project



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