

Integrated ecosystem management in the Jordan Rift Valley

Funded by the Global Environment Facility, through the World Bank
Start date 2007
End date 2013

The Jordan Rift Valley is an integral part of the Great Rift Valley and provides a globally critical land bridge between Africa, Europe, and Asia that supports a large variety of ecologically diverse habitats of international importance and funnels millions of migrating birds between these continents each year. The Valley is of strategic economic importance for its natural resources, including the Jordan River, Dead Sea, and Gulf of Aqaba. It encompasses the most productive agricultural land resources in Jordan and hence has become a focal area for infrastructure and tourism development and land conversion. The Government of Jordan has long recognized this dilemma and is seeking ways to secure the Valley's economic and ecological integrity for the benefit of its people.

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 the biodiversity and ecological processes can be sustained under development pressure and social change. This approach will be applied in the Jordan Rift Valley through small-scale, targeted interventions in the current land use planning framework and through the setting up of a network of conservation sites that are developed as models of the IEM approach.

A network of sites is to be established along the Valley, consisting of four high status protected areas (PAs). (Yarmouk, Jabal Masuda, Fifa and Qatar) in addition to seven collaboratively managed Special Conservation Areas (SCAs). The PAs cover a total area of 56,950 hectares and are all delineated on the JVAs land-use master plan. Map 1

- **Yarmouk (area 20 km²)**
- **Fifa (proposed area 23.4 Km²)**
- **Qatar (proposed area 49 Km²)**
- **Jabal Masuda (proposed area 295 Km²)**
- **Ibn Hammad**
- **Homret Maeen**
- **Rahmah**