

**Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs**  
**Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency**

**Capacity Building and Institutional Support To**  
**The Nature Conservation Sector**  
**NCSCB**

**First Semester Progress Report**  
**January – June 2007**  
**To**  
**Project Executive Committee**



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## **Acronyms**

AWP	Annual Work Plan
BP	Business Plan
BioMAP	Monitoring and Assessing Biodiversity Project
CBD	Convention on Biodiversity
CEPA	Communication, Education and Public Awareness Strategy
CHM	Clearing House Mechanism
DGCD	Directorate General of Cooperation for Development
EG DS	Italian (Egyptian) Debt for Development Swap
EEAA	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIECP	Egyptian Italian Environmental Cooperation Programme
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
IUCN	World Conservation Union
KA	Key Activity
LIFP	Legal and Institutional Framework Project
MBU	Marketing and Business Unit
MEE	Management Effectiveness Evaluation
MSEA	Minister of State for Environmental Affairs
NCSCB	Nature Conservation Sector Capacity Building Project
NCS	Nature Conservation Sector
NC	National Consultant
PA	Protected Areas
PDF-A	Project Development Facility (First Phase)
PHC	Public Holding Company
POP	Project Operations Plan
PTU	Permanent Training Unit
QT	Quarterly Targets
RAPPAM	Rapid Appraisal of Protected Area Management
RBM	Results Based Management
RMBP	Ras Mohamed Business Plan
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WRBP	Wadi Rayan Business Plan

## **Executive Summary:**

This report to the Project Executive Committee (PEC) presents the progress of NCSCB Project during the First Semester of the Annual Work Plan for 2007-Mar 2008.

The first 6 months of year 2007 represented a crucial period in the timeframe of the project subject to meeting some factors that affected its whole implementation process; mainly the following:

- Revalidation of the POP as a result of 2006 progress report, to re-adjust the targets and indicators about the institutional reform of NCS to become an autonomous self-funded institution, which resulted to be excessively ambitious.
- Partial suspension of the expenditures of the project by CEO/EEAA from February, in order to redirect its resources to develop infrastructures in Nabq PA, which was resolved at the end of June 2007.
- A Mid Term Evaluation conducted in the first quarter of 2007, which appreciated the project achievements and its financial rate of disbursement, recommending concentrating the project remaining efforts in specific directions which have been considered.

During this report period the international and national consultants were phased out and the NCS staff has assumed the leadership of the technical units; 8 months IUCN technical assistance were delivered: 3 months for ICM while the PCU Italian Coordinator took over this position, 2.5 months for business planning, 1.5 months for ancient archeology of Gilf Kebir, one month to complete MEE of 4 Pas; 20 months national technical assistance were provided: 6 months for both the biodiversity advisor and business planning consultants, 6 months for the EIA expert who will continue up to end of 2007, and 2 months for the planning expert.

The overall project expenditure for the first semester was \$ 173,146 that constitutes 39% of AWP budget, including the committed payments (essentially for IUCN), which doesn't appear in UNDP report of the semester. The total disbursement of the project over the past 27 month since project inception (75% of scheduled project duration) is \$ 877,081 that represents 77% of the overall project budget of \$ 1,145,410. So, expenditure rates are on schedule.

Despite the constraints encountered, the project performance was acceptable by achieving 64 % of the planned targets of the first semester. Meanwhile, the NCS requires more human development with qualified staff, mobilization of sufficient financial resources and establishment of an enabling environment both institutionally and administratively.

## **1- Introduction:**

This report presents the progress for the first 6 months of the Annual Work Plan "January 2007 – March 2008". It describes the major actions and financial inputs undertaken in response to the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) recommendations issued in March 2007, and the directives of H. E. the Minister of State for Environmental Affairs (MSEA) that reoriented part of the Debt Swap funds towards the improvement of tracks in Nabq Protected Area. It is worth to mention that the preparation of the new AWP (in fact a Work Plan was circulated by the PMU in January 2007 and it was ready to be discussed by the PEC meeting) took all the semester, as the decision about the realignment of the funds arrived at the end of June. Moreover, the regular project financial disbursement was suspended by the CEO/EEAA from February 2007 until finalizing a new Work Plan, and de facto only salaries, minor operational expenses and the committed International Consultancies from IUCN were allowed.

At last, the Annual Work Plan has been formulated in June 2007 including the improvement of Nabq tracks network in order to support ecotourism and protect its ecosystems. Although the constraints met, the project has continued its committed activities with very limited financial resources and in cooperation with other projects.

## **2- Project Progress:**

The attached Annotated Annual work plan (Annex 1) provides details in the project's progress towards set of activities. Table (1) below summarizes the contribution of the project during the first 6 months of year 2007 regarding the attainment of its outcome while table (2) provides summary of progress on the project's two outputs and related key activities.

**Table (1): NESCB Project Outcome and Update Summary**

<b>Outcome (0) and indicator (I)</b>	<b>Update on outcome</b>
0: Enhanced institutional and technical capacity of NCS to manage a decentralized national network of protected areas and their contained biodiversity.	The GEF project proposal to support financial sustainability of Egypt's PA system relies on the capacity built of NCS and proposed reform of its institutional structure.
I: Future status of the NCS agreed by the end of 2007	Future status of NCS as sector in EEAA is likely to continue to the end of the project

**Table (2) Update on NCSCB Project Progress on Outputs and Key Activities Measured by Indicators and Targets.**

<b>Outputs and key activities</b>	<b>Indicators and targets</b>	<b>Achievements and comments</b>
<b>Output 1</b>		
NCS capacity enhanced	NCS restructured and administratively reformed by end of 2007 Restructured NCS with TUs effectively embedded	<b>Partially achieved</b> TUS operational within NCS.  Existing structure of the Sector in EEAA needs detailed organization and enforcement
<b>Key activities</b>		
KA1: three NCS TUs created for planning, EIA and licensing, business and marketing	Technical units provide an demand assistance to NCS Director by mid 2007.  TUs fully institutional issued and effective	<b>Partially achieved.</b> IUCN TA has been ended.  TUs need more office space and redeployment of NCS staff to them
KA2: NCS reformed as institution process	NCS policy and regulatory framework in place by end 2007  Final policy platforms approved	<b>Policy framework developed</b> in 2006 and application depends on NCS reform and financial sustainability.  Project will test a model of decentralization and financial sustainability and provide training
<b>Output 2</b>		
Enhanced NCS capacity operational	NCS and TUs provide effective management and technical support to protected areas by end of 2007.  TUs effectively support PAs	<b>Mostly achieved.</b> National consultants to TUs have been phased out.  Require more qualified staff and support the training center
KA1: NCS Staff effectively evaluate, license and monitor economic activities within Protected Areas	Report on EIA procedural reform and recommendations agreed by 2006, monitoring system of licensed activities designed.  Procedure EIA manuals and monitoring of licensed activities issued	<b>Partially achieved.</b> 59 EIA studies evaluated; 46 accepted and 13 rejected.  EIA procedure reviewed and to be coordinated with EIA Central department

KA2: Formalized protected area management planning instituted and national protected area system plan revised and applied	Technical support to PAMUs for management planning and national system plan published by end 2007	<b>Partially achieved.</b> Draft RM management plan. Nabq management plan started. MEE workshops held. Gilf Kebir expedition and report.
KA3: PA Business planning, resource development, marketing and public relations promote and support the NCS as the lead institution for biodiversity conservation in Egypt	Financial analysis of NCS completed and PA Business Plan format established by end 2006 and Business Plan for NCS instituted by end of 2007.	<b>Partially achieved.</b> Business plan model of PA and framework of NCS – BP. A manual of business planning produced. Report on marketing and branding. Parks website designed

Table (3) summarizes the annotated work plan (Annex 1) in terms of the Project's record in meeting 1<sup>st</sup> Semester sub-activity targets. The not achieved activities were affected by the unavailability of financial resources while the partially achieved ones are ongoing actions.

**Table (3) summary of project progress on sub-activity 2nd quainter targets**

<b>Outputs and activities</b>	<b>Achieved</b>	<b>Partially achieved (50%)</b>	<b>Not achieved</b>	<b>Total targets %</b>
<b>Output 1</b>				
Key activity 1 (Establish TUs)	3	2	1	6 (66%)
2 (institutional reform)	2		2	4 (50%)
<b>Output 2</b>				
Key activity 1 (EIA and licensing)	2	1	1	4 (63%)
2 (planning)	2	3		5 (70%)
3 (Business and marketing)	4	5	1	10 (65%)
<b>Total</b>	13	11	5	29 (64%)

### **3- Project Highlights During Reporting Period**

#### **Output 1 NCS Capacity Enhanced**

##### **KA (1): Three NCS Technical Units Created for Planning, EIA and Licensing, Business and Marketing**

The project PMU ensured development of the 3 TUs through the provision of technical assistance of international and national consultants, as well as it benefits the associated NCS staff. The 3 TUs require recruiting of more full job qualified staff to tackled their jobs for all PAs, taking into consideration that the national consultants (except EIA) have been phased out during the reporting period, as well as the IUCN technical assistant had been ended. The PMU will continue the technical support to the units while they should work independently by the end of 2007. The human development of the units and the NCS in large is crucial.

The PMU maintained the operation of its office with limited staff and run project activities with minimum budget which affected the achievement of some targets; specially the translation, printing and publication of publicity materials. Luckily the close cooperation with the LIFE (USAID) Program helped in the implementation of business planning workshops that was supported by the presence of the IUCN consultant contracted by NCSCB Project.

##### **KA (1) 2: NCS Reformed as Institution Process**

The NCSCB Project worked effectively in 2005 and 2006 to develop NCS towards an autonomous economic institution as a Nature Conservation Authority. The MSEA undertook the legal measures in the direction of its establishment by a Presidential Decree, but the process was stopped due to unforeseen reasons. However, on the occasion of the Environmental Day of June 2007, H.E. the Minister of State for Environmental Affairs declared in the press conference that this target is still in the coming plan of the Ministry.

The project institutional development study attracted the attention of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) to launch an initiative for a project entitled “Promotion of financial sustainability of the national system of protected areas” and produced a concept paper by the end of 2006 in cooperation with NCS. In the 1st quarter of 2007 the National Advisor of NCSCB to NCS Director represented the NCS in the GEF National Committee and presented this proposed biodiversity project for GEF funding. He also advised NCS on the conservation of biological diversity reports, establishment of Egypt’s Biodiversity Cleaning House Mechanism, drafting the Bio-safety National Legislation, unified format for PA’s Managers reports, synergies of Bio-conventions and prepared a number of policy documents and technical papers on biodiversity.

Training of trainers was conducted in Italy (University Milano Bicocca) for two rangers from the Red Sea protectorate, aimed to enhance their knowledge on Marine Biology, with particular focus on the activities undertaken in Samadai at the Dolphin House. After two months spent in Italy, they returned to their job in Marsa Alam, where they will conduct, besides their usual work, specialized research which will be lead to obtain their Master degree. It is anticipated that some support has been asked to LIFE project.



A second training package was foreseen to be held in Italy for enhancing the capacity of PA management, but the course was cancelled. The project will therefore grasp other opportunities which will arise during the year.

The project started initial discussions with the Italian consultant of LIFP, Dr. Fodella and Dr Palezcny of WRPA project to explore some procedures to apply decentralization and reaching financial sustainability of PAs. Extra following steps will be continued along with the development of business plan of WRPA.

## **Output 2: Enhanced NCS Capacity Operational**

### **K (2) 1: NCS Staff Effectively Evaluates License and Monitor Economic Activities Within Protected Areas:**

The draft **procedure guidelines** had been revised with LIFP and they are in process of coordination with EIA Central Department. After its adoption, it will be published and circulated to PAMUs.

The National Consultant assisted the PAMUs to ensure compliance of economic activities according to licenses conditions. The **operational manual for monitoring** is still under development. The lessons of field monitoring in the Red Sea are: the transfer of soil from outside district for land reclamation is prohibited to avoid invasive species; restricted dimensions for floating pontoons (4\*8m) to avoid negative effects of shadows on the marine life and the floating walk-ways are only used in lagoons and semi-closed areas. The experience of EIA TU about disposal of high salinity effluent from the desalinization plants has been published worldwide (Technical report – MAP no. 139)

The project continued its **support to NCS on evaluation of 59 EIAs studies** (35 tourism, 12 industrial petroleum, 5 agricultural and fish farming, 7 housing), the results of evaluation were 46 agreed and 13 rejected. The EIA national consultant prepared special studies for H. E. the Minister on the development of the Southern coastal road, priorities for de-mining some selected sites in the Western Desert and explore new urban sites in El Alameen. He maintained good cooperation with the National Center for Planning State Land Use (NCPSLU), Ministry of Defense and the EIA central department in EEAA.

### **K (2) 2: Formalized Protected Areas Management Planning Instituted and National System Plan Revised and Applied**

The contract of the national consultant for planning was ended in Feb 2007 without further extension. The planning technical unit of NCS took over the planning activities as it has two qualified staff who work in close coordination with the Project PMU.

**Two Management Plans** have been drafted for Qaroun and Ras Mohamed which will be revised, discussed and elaborated with PAMUs and NCS staff before endorsement.

**The Management Effectiveness Evaluation** on site level was initiated in the second half of 2006 with technical support of IUCN consultant and the Planning Unit; Wadi El Rayan's report was finished. The work continued in first half of 2007 and finalized the other 3 reports of MEE for Qaroun, ST Katherine and Ras Mohamed through intensive workshops with managers and PAs staff as well as relevant stakeholders. A general report is going to be prepared to conclude the experience and outputs of effectiveness assessment on both levels of NCS and 4 PAs. This will be translated into Arabic and published for the decision makers and PAMUs.

**The expedition of Gilf Kebir** was undertaken in Feb 2007 by the project, NCS staff, IUCN consultants and representatives of various stakeholders and local community in order to examine conservation issues and to introduce protection measures to that recent declared protected area by the Prime Ministry Decree no. 10 in January 2007. The expedition report was issued in March 2007 including the main features, status, management approach and proposed management interventions. A national workshop was held in April 2007, where all stakeholders and interested parties participated to discuss the management proposals.

**To enhance ecosystem protection and ecotourism plan** it is scheduled to support the infrastructure of Nabq PA by improving its track system in the framework of its management plan which is going to be developed in parallel. For this activity the AWP has allocated a substantial amount of money \$ 130,000, under the debt swap fund the bid and implementation will be fulfilled in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of year 2007.

### **K (2)3: Business Planning, Resources Development, Marketing and Public Relations**

The project contracted Mr. Jose Galindo, IUCN consultant for **business planning support** that contributes to the financial sustainability process for the protected areas system of Egypt. To achieve this, the consultant designed and generated capacity planning at site (PA) and system (NCS) level.

The international technical assistance was delivered for 2.5 months in cooperation with the national consultant and NCS staff. He reviewed and commented on the proposed national consultant business plan outlined for WRPA, produced an alternative model for business planning of Pas, which includes strategic approach, objectives, audiences, outlines and methodology. A design for systematic framework of NCS business plan was formulated including objectives, stakeholders, outlines, necessary information, scope and links with PA BPs. He advised and participated in the start up process of preparation RMBP and improvement of WRBP. A manual was produced on how to prepare a business plan of PA. Two workshops were held for the preparation of RMBP and WRBP as well as a final 2 days workshop attended by 70 participants from NCS, PAs and other projects. Those workshops were held with minimum financial resources from the project while the LIFE Programme (USAID) supported the final one.

The main results achieved are: increase of understanding of BP as management tool in Egypt, NCS and PA business planning team established and trained, models and references for future learning produced.

The IUCN consultant Ms. Victoria Harper for **Marketing and Outreach** and a national expert were contracted in the last quarter of 2006 to develop marketing strategy framework for NCS and design branding and outreach materials. The consultant has completed the planned activities during in the period of this report, which took extra work time without additional payment, due to some delay of collecting reliable data and proper maps of PAs.

The input was successfully achieved: an agreed mission statement and corporate identity for the nation's PA system Park Egypt, attractive and standardized leaflets in Arabic and English for 10 PAs along with a retaining folder and the design of dedicated website for protected areas.

All these products were driven from meetings and workshops with the employees of NCS, both in the field and at the sector. In addition, two presentations were developed: one to communicate the value of the NCS as Egypt's leading body for nature conservation, and the other makes the case for institutional reform of NCS. The importance of a strong corporate image for the purposes of marketing and seeking funding opportunities is part of business planning strategy. The input reported has established a solid basis for NCS marketing and branding campaigns with standard templates and formats from which to organize and launch communications and messages related to Parks Egypt. However, this marketing and branding strategy is a process which is unfinished and needs to be continued. Information leaflets have to be created for the remaining 17 parks and the website has to be completed with contents created according to the template for the other 21 parks. It is imperative that the NCS consolidates and build on this foundation.

## **4 - Support and cooperation with Donor Projects**

### **a) EIECP Projects**

The NCSCB has technical support and cooperation with three EIECP projects at Elba PA, WRPA and Siwa PA (transferred lastly to the New Valley PAs)

During the reporting period the NCSCB provided technical and administrative assistance to **Elba PA** in preparation of its progress report for 2006 and the annual work plan of 2007, as well as their presentation to the PEC in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2007. NCSCB has developed TORs for IUCN consultants in collaboration with Elba PAMU for coastal resources survey (Dr. Tony Rouphael) and for large mammals survey (Dr. Omar Attum), which were completed and lastly their draft reports have been submitted to NCS. The first survey was accomplished in late 2006 to strengthen management of marine biological values in Elba and Red Sea. The second survey evaluated in Ma 2007 ythe status of large fauna population through rapid assessment in PAs of the Eastern Desert.

NCSCB has close cooperation with **WRPA project**, especially in development of Wadi El Hitan area, the Nature World Heritage site and development of business plan for the WRPA, which is considered a case study to explore financial sustainability and decentralization exercise.

A team of IUCN consultants and NCS staff, coordinated by the project, provided extensive assistance to **Siwa Project** during year 2006 to develop an integrated strategy and implementation plan for sustainable tourism in Siwa, in particular for the PA. However this project encountered a lot of obstacles about the allocation of its fund and the insistence of H.E. the Governor of Matrouh to disburse higher percentage of the budget to a Health Center inside Siwa PA.

In April 2007 H.E. the Minister of International Cooperation agreed on the transfer of the component of Siwa PA to develop the **New Valley PAs** (White Desert and Gilf Kebir). NCSCB is coordinating with NCS and IUCN consultant in preparation of a project document and a detailed work plan, which could be presented to the PEC within few weeks. NCSCB will continue support to the New Valley Project which should be considered as an integral part of NCSCB.

#### **b) Other projects**

<sup>2</sup>  
NCSCB cooperates with other projects which are related to increasing the capacity of NCS and PAs, mainly SSRDP in South Sinai and LIFE in the Red Sea.

The National Co. Manager of NCSCB representing EEAA in the Steering Committee of **South Sinai Regional Development Programme** (SSRDP) financed by EC through Europe Aid by € 64 million to the South Sinai Governorate with the purpose of sustainable development protection of fragile environment and social development.

One of the main projects established in the programme is “Environment and Sustainable Development” which concentrates on development of South Sinai Protected Areas especially for the provision of the necessary equipment. Close coordination with that programme managed to contact for valuable essential assets of equipment of cost Euro 5.1 million including well equipped boats, moorings, monitoring and diving facilities, marine tracking system and vehicles. This equipment is going to be delivered in the 2nd half of 2007 and year 2008.

The other projects in that programme are mostly related to environmental protection, e.g. solid waste management, sewage system enhancement, visitor management of St. Katherine Monastery area and water supply to St. Katherine & Firan village.

The NCS has coordinated with **LIFE**, USAID programme in the Red Sea especially to support Elba protected area for some activities of monitoring, training courses, solid waste campaigns, local women handcraft productions and others since both of them work in the Red Sea and have combined targets of nature protection and social development.

The LIFE programme has been attracted by NCSCB efforts on business planning of PAs and the good quality of IUCN consultant contracted by the project. Subsequently LIFE funded the 2 days final Business Planning workshop, attended by 70 participants. The LIFE Programme has planned to develop a business plan for Wadi El Gimal PA in the Red Sea according the model produced by NCSCB project, which at the end will expand the economic concept of management PAs in Egypt to attain financial sustainability and decentralization

## **5- Overall Expenditure During Reporting Period**

The total funding has been allocated for the NCSCB project in 2007- Mar.2008 AWP was \$441,549 comprised as follows:

A). DGCD - \$201,310

B). EGDS - \$240,239

Table (4) summarizes the expenditures from project inception to date and the respective fund balances of the project until June 2007 according to UNDP-ATLAS report. The total disbursement from the project's inception in March 2005 to June 30 2007, constitutes 69% of the total Project budget of \$1,145,434.00. Total project expenditure to date from DGCD funds is 73% while expenditure from EGDS is 64% .

**Table (4) Summary of Expenditures and Fund Balance (US\$)**

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Award</b>	<b>2005 Expenditures</b>	<b>2006 Expenditures</b>	<b>2007-Mar.08 Expenditures Until 30/6/2007</b>	<b>Balance 1/7/07</b>	<b>Total disbursem ent rate %</b>
DGCD	634,593	216,342	216,942	29,643	171,667	73%
EGDS	510,841	107,537	163,065	58,581	181,658	64%
<b>Total</b>	1,145,434	323,879	380,007	*88,224	353,325	69%

Table (5) shows the actual expenditures of the project against 2007-Mar.08 AWP as UNDP-ATLAS report:

**Table (5) Reported Fund disbursements against 2007-Mar 08 AWP:**

<b>AWP 2006</b>	<b>Allocated</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>Balances</b>	<b>Disbursement rate</b>
<b>DGCD</b>	201,310	29,643	171,667	14.7%
<b>EGDS</b>	240,239	58,581	181,658	24.3%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>441,549</b>	<b>*88,224</b>	<b>353,325</b>	<b>20%</b>

\* Expenditures are not including IUCN Consultants fees, Local Consultants salaries of June.07 and some pending payments due to the suspension of expenditures from the project. These commitments are expressed in Table (6).

**Table (6) List of commitments up till end of June 2007:**

<b>S</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount (\$)</b>
1	Co-Manager ( June .07 ) salary	2,165
2	Ms. Myrette El-Sokkari ( June.07 ) salary	2,112
3	Dr. Hamdallah Zeidan ( June.07) salary	2,112
4	Mr. Omr Hassan ( June.07 ) Salary	1000
5	Deliverables	3,170
6	Management effectiveness Work Shop expenses	2,235
7	Business plan Work Shop expenses	1,078
8	<b><u>IUCN Consultant fees :</u></b> - Dr. John Grainger ( 3 months ) - Dr. Dan Plcezy ( 1 month ) - Dr. Kuper ( 1.5 month ) - Mr. Jose Galindo ( 2.5 month )	73,000
<b>Total Commitments till end of June.07</b>		<b>84,972</b>

Accordingly the actual overall project expenditures during the reporting period is presented in table (7)

**Table (7) Actual fund disbursements against 2007 - Mar.08 AWP including commitments**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	4(1+2)	(1-4)	(4/1)%
Fund	Budget 2007- Mar2008	ATLAS Expenditures up to 30/6/2007	Commitments up to 30/6/2007	Total Expenditures	Balance 1/7/2007	Utilization
DGCD	201310.39	29643.19	73000	102643.19	98667.20	51%
EGDS	240239.18	58580.88	11972.00	70552.88	169686.30	29%
<b>Total</b>	<b>441549.57</b>	<b>88224.07</b>	<b>84972.00</b>	<b>173196.07</b>	<b>268353.50</b>	<b>39%</b>

The total disbursement of the project of this AWP is \$173,196.07 constitutes 39% of the budget and the balance for the following 9 months is \$268353.50. The total disbursements of the project over the past 27 month period since project inception (75% of the scheduled project duration) is \$877,081 that represents 77% of the over all budget. So expenditure rate of the project is on schedule.

## **6- Main Planned Activities for Next 9 Months**

There are no adjustments to the POP or the AWP at this time. The future activities will focus on the following:

- Improving the tracking system of Nabq PA to enhance ecotourism activities as a main component of its management plan
- Increasing the efficiency of technical units to implement the existing plans, training courses and field follow up.
- Preparation of two business plans for both WRPA and RMPA by the NCS and PAs business planning teams, with full support of NCSCB and applying in WRPA a model for financial sustainability and decentralization.
- Completion of 5 PA Management Plans of RM, Nabq, Qaroun including the northern sector, update WR plan including the world Heritage Site and the framework of Gilf management plan.
- In parallel to finalize the 4 MEE of WR, Qaroun, St. Katherine and RM and the final evaluation report that will be distributed and discussed in a special workshop.
- Continuing support the NCS on the EIA evaluations of projects in and around the PAs, develop and publish EIA guidelines and monitoring procedural manual of monitoring the economic activities in PA as well as field inspections.
- Translation, printing, publishing, a lot of essential products to be used as manuals for Pa management, evaluation monitoring and business planning; training references for rangers, branding and public awareness leaflets, complete parks website.
- Supporting the New Valley project in both planning and implementation, on the level of NCS, in the field and coordination with the stakeholders and local communities.
- Continuing collaboration with Elba, WR, SSRDP, LIFE and may be new GEF project.
- In the first quarter of year 2008, the PMU will finalize all uncompleted activities, prepare the final report and hand over all assets and documents to NCS.

**7- Conclusion:**

Despite the constraints met, the project performance achieved 64 % of the planned targets of the first semester, while the rest of the activities are proceeding. Meanwhile, the NCS requires more human development with qualified staff, mobilization of sufficient financial resources and establishment of enabling environment both institutionally and administratively.



## **Annex 1**

### **Mid Term Evaluation Extract of NCSCB Project – March 2007**

## Mid Term Evaluation Extract of NCSCB Project – March 2007

### PROJECT RESULTS

The Project is contributing tangibly to the enhancement of NCS capacity by achieving success in both personal (individual learning) training and by improving organisational structure and capabilities of NCS and its Technical Units. Below are the kinds of contributions achieved:

Table 6: Project Results

OUTPUTS, KEY ACTIVITIES	INDICATOR	Contribution
Output 1. NCS Capacity Enhanced	NCS Restructured by 2006	Partially achieved: NCS internal Capacity Enhanced. Status officially raised within EEAA Structure.
KA1.1: 3 Technical Units created for Planning, EIA, marketing	TUs provide effective assistance to NCS and Protectorates	Achieved. TU operational and actively discharging their duties according to newly developed ToRs.
KA 1.2: NCS Institutional Reform Process	NCS Policy and Regulatory Framework in place by end of 2006	Initiated and fostered. Policy Framework developed but its application deferred pending MSEA decision
Output 2. Enhanced NCS operational capacity	NCS and TUs provide management & support to PAs by end of 2006	Achieved and Operational
KA 2.1: NCS staff evaluate, license and monitor economic activities within PAs	Report on EIA reform implemented by 2006 and manual by 1st Q 2007	Partially achieved: Report finalised; manual under development.
KA 2.2: PA management Planning instituted and National PA System Plan revised and applied	TA support to all PAMUs for planning, standard plan format, national system published by 2006	Achieved and being implemented. 70 PAMUs personnel trained in Management Planning.
KA 2.3: PA Business Planning, marketing and PR promoting NCS	NCS financial analysis, business plan format 2006, marketing strategy 2006, funding plan 2007	Achieved: formats available, strategy developed.

Capacity Building is not only about personal enhancement and organised structure; it depends also on possibilities to mobilise resources and enabling environment resulting from NCSCB proposed reforms being implemented and applied.

In any case, though commitment and understanding may be largely missing in the Institution as such due to bureaucracy, a number of concerned individuals in Line Ministries and Public

Institutions appear to show encouraging signs of understanding which may have been well if sufficiently nurtured and pro-actively engaged.

For the impacts of the Project-induced activities and results beyond its immediate beneficiaries, very positive impact is felt at Protectorate Level on the state of protected natural resources, on local communities sharing improved profits and revenues from resources and tourism activities and securing sustainability of the same, and on private investors raising business opportunities from renewable sources.

Eventually, sustainability of Project results, though not specifically planned in the Project Design may however occur due to the very nature of Project actions, directly targeted at institutions set-up and operational procedures.

## **LESSONS LEARNT**

Success would only be achieved if all stakeholders were brought to understand from the very beginning that the final output might be in the end beneficial to everybody, thus achieving optimal levels of commitment of the implementing Institution as a whole.

In this light, design of an Institutional Strengthening Project on a timeframe of three years only, with Technical Assistance barely sufficient for two years puts strong pressure on available resources and risks excessive exposure to bureaucratic difficulties.

In any case, the Project approach remains a valid way forward that should not be abandoned but rather pursued with renewed energy: Egypt still needs a great deal of Institution building. The strategy followed in the past to concentrate on individual Protected Areas has proved to be a dead approach as shown by the limited progress achieved by the 24 M€ EU South Sinai / Gulf of Aqaba Programme.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

As the Project is entering its conclusive year of activity and the long-term Technical Assistance is also being phased out, it needs to concentrate its remaining efforts in consolidating achievements in terms of ensuring Technical Units full operational capacity, focus on transfer of knowledge from consultants to internal NCS staff and counterparts, and completion of procedural and technical manuals to be used by HQ and Field Staff.

Such a busy workload, though lighter than what was foreseen under AWP 2005 and 2006 would still represent a substantial effort which will not permit the discharging of what has been termed in 2005/2006 Annual Reports “Soft Assistance” of a general nature to the NCS Director, as the PMU, possibly reduced to the national Co-manager only would have to concentrate on Project remaining priority actions.

As a guide, the following are important achievable actions foreseen within 2006 AWP that will contribute to consolidate Project results:

#### Under KA 1.2 (Institutional Reform)

- Activity 1.2.7: Focus on training still needed especially regarding EIA, licensing, and Business Plan making.

#### Under KA 2.1 (NCS Staff evaluate, license and monitor economic activities in PAs)

- Activity 2.1.3: Complete process and procedures for systematisation of operational evaluation of EIA at HQ level, instead of concentrating on single evaluations.
- Activities 2.1.6 and 2.1.7 (to be aggregated): Complete design of a Monitoring System for EIA licensed activities and include it into an operational manual for PAMU staff.

#### Under KA 2.2 (Protected Area Management Planning)

- Activities 2.2.7 and 2.2.9 (to be aggregated): Complete design at HQ of a M&E Reporting system and include it into a comprehensive manual for PAMUs staff containing standardised PA procedures, reporting formats and requirements, general administrative norms, etc.

With regard to the Implementing Agency, in particular to the EEAA management, in order to ensure a higher level of Project results sustainability, the evaluation team is confident that the EEAA will endeavour to:

- Speeding up the process of planning documentation, strategies, operational guidelines, organisational charts, Terms of References, and other administrative requirements from the Project as part of NCSCB agreed discharging of approved activities;
- Strengthening staff levels of the NCS Structure.
- Enforcing a rotation mechanism for Rangers of the Protected Areas in order for them to exchange experiences and contribute to the improvement of the management weak PAs.

## **Annex 2**

### **Annotated Work Plan showing progress toward targets and indicators**

## **Annex 3**

### **Financial Analysis of Expenditures by Budget Lines and ATLAS**