

Info sheet Development Programmes on Soqatra Island

The United Nations system works very closely with The Government of Yemen to support the protection of the Soqatra Archipelago. A brief summary of past, ongoing and planned conservation initiatives supported by the UN is provided below [all projects are implemented with the EPA/MOWE of Yemen]:

Socotra Biodiversity Project (1997-2001): funded by the Global Environment Facility and implemented through UNDP. It was the first and yet to date the largest GEF project in Yemen. Main achievements: developed a national team of the Environmental Protection Authority with recognised biodiversity conservation capacity (over 80 staff: now the largest and most experienced branch of EPA Yemen); developed the first Socotra Conservation Zoning Plan through a consultative community and science based process (plan approved in year 2000); supported the establishment of several conservation oriented NGOs in the island of Socotra; supported the design and implementation of several other parallel and subsequent initiatives in the Archipelago, such as the EU Masterplan and several GEF Small Grants Programs, as well as a range of UN and donor funded projects on health, water management, governance, fisheries development, ecotourism, sustainable agriculture and livestock management, either as small grants or as part of UN projects follow-up phases (see below);

Socotra Conservation and Development Programme (SCDP) - phase one: implemented through and funded by UNDP and the Royal Netherlands Embassy (2001-2004). Continued support for the conservation of Biodiversity in the archipelago, and expanded work to integrate a range of development projects initiated in the previous phase (see above). Provided the basis for the UNESCO nomination as Man and Biosphere Reserve (2003), and subsequent World Heritage Site (2008), as well as for the nomination of first Ramsar sites in Yemen (2007). Provided the basis for subsequent SCDP 5-year extension with funding from Italy, and further GEF support (see below); supported the first explorations of the island's underground Karstic system and discovery of significant cave systems as well as major archaeological findings. Played a major role in mitigating the impact of road constructions in the island.

Socotra Conservation and Development Programme (SCDP) - phase two: implemented through UNDP and funded by UNDP and Italy (2005-2010). Training for national staff, establishment of an integrated Decision Support System to support better environmental governance for the archipelago's sustainable development.

Socotra Governance and Biodiversity Project: funded by the GEF and FFEM implemented through UNDP (2008-ongoing). Establishing a legal and institutional framework for the management of the World Heritage Site in close collaboration with the local government authorities and in line with the decentralization process of Yemen. Assessing the potential impact of invasive alien species and biodiversity conservation management. For more info: <http://www.socotraproject.org/> and www.undp.org.ye

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Forthcoming

Yemen Integrated Biodiversity Conservation Programme: in preparation. to be funded by GEF/UNEP, implemented through MOWE/EPE - UNEP and in close collaboration with GIZ and UNDP (proposal currently in preparation for submission to the GEF, expected timing for preparation and implementation 2013-2020).

For additional information: www.unep.org

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