



Photo: UNDP/Iran / Hamed Gholami

## Enhancing Integrated Natural Resource Management for the Restoration of Wetland Ecosystems and Support to Alternative Livelihoods Development of Local Communities

May 2024

### Project Information

**Funding:** USD 11,206,000

**Duration:** 1 February 2020 to 31 January 2025

**Implementing Agencies / Partners:** European Union, Department of Environment of Iran, and Ministry of Agriculture Jihad

#### Objective:

- Restore and improve the ecological health of the Hamoun wetlands.
- Enhance water and soil conditions to control dust storms and improve agricultural viability.
- Raise awareness and participation in sustainable resource use and conservation practices.
- Strengthen international cooperation for effective management and restoration efforts.

#### Background:

The project aims to address the critical degradation of the Hamoun wetlands in Sistan and Baluchistan province, Iran, exacerbated by climate change and unsustainable water usage. Through promoting integrated natural resource management, the initiative focuses on restoring these vital ecosystems and supporting the

development of alternative livelihoods for local communities.

Due to current political context, the project has been suspended until further notice by the European Union.

#### Challenges:

The Sistan plain, including the Hamoun wetlands, faces severe environmental challenges due to reduced water availability from climate change impacts, increased temperatures, and heightened sand and dust storms. These conditions have led to significant socio-economic repercussions, including displacement and increased vulnerability of local populations.

- Addressing the transboundary water management issues with Afghanistan to ensure sustainable water inflow to the Hamoun wetlands.

- Adapting to ongoing climatic variations which impact water availability and ecosystem health.

### Key Components:

1. Capacity Building and Coordination: Enhance local and national capacities for better management and coordination in wetland restoration.
2. Sustainable Land and Water Management: Implement strategies for effective water management and sustainable land use to counteract the adverse effects of droughts and resource depletion.
3. Climate-Smart Agriculture and Alternative Livelihoods: Promote sustainable agricultural practices and develop alternative livelihood opportunities for local communities, focusing on resilience to climate impacts.

### Expected Outcomes:

- Capacities, institutional arrangements, and coordination mechanisms among key stakeholders developed in the Hamoun wetlands.
- Sustainable land and water management and wetland restoration measures implemented.

- Strategy and plan of action for sustainable and climate-smart agriculture and alternative livelihoods developed and priority actions implemented.

### Partnerships:

The project is implemented through a robust partnership framework, spearheaded by direct collaboration with the Department of Environment. It fosters comprehensive coordination with various public, private, and social institutions to enhance integrated development across Sistan and Baluchistan Province. Strategic alliances include:

- University of Zabol: The project partners with the University to promote innovative agricultural technologies for efficient water use, boosting economic opportunities and youth engagement in the region.
- UN Agencies: Collaborative efforts with UN agencies ensure a coordinated approach, supporting diverse development aspects comprehensively.
- UNDP/GEF-SGP: Leveraging the successes and best practices from the UNDP/GEF Small Grants Programme, the project integrates advanced ecosystem management strategies and addresses key environmental challenges like land degradation, climate change, and biodiversity conservation.