

Some achieved activities on the occasion of the international year of biodiversity during the first half of 2010 in Syrian Arab Republic:

- 1- The first central festival implemented at Al Fourounloq P.A. site- Lattakia governorate, on June 24, 2010 sponsored and attended by H.E. Minister of State for Environment Affairs (MSEA) Dr. Kawkab Daya, Lattakia Governor Dr. Khalil Mashhadyieh and staff of MSEA and Ministry of Agriculture & Agrarian Reform (MAAR), local communities representatives at the Al Fourounloq, Abu Qubies and Jebel Abdul Aziz PA sites and NGOs representatives. Such event was one of activities of the Biodiversity Conservation and Protected Area Management project (BCPAM-SYR/05/010) executed by MSEA in collaboration with MAAR. The festival was the first day of a four day take care campaign for Al Fourounloq PA site.

H.E Minister of MSEA delivered a speech focused on the importance of 2010- the international year of biodiversity in identifying biodiversity for all community levels and the participation of local communities and NGOs in biodiversity conservation and PAs management. She also showed the achievements done by MSEA and the country in this regard.

Lattakia governor spoke about the importance of forests and biodiversity in Lattakia and expressed his happiness that this festival is being done in Lattakia.

Dr. Akram Eissa Darwich, the National Coordinator of CBD made a presentation showing various options of Eco-tourism activities and components to be done at Al Fourounloq PA site.

- 2- On the occasion of the international year of biodiversity and environment day, a central festival in Douma town, Damascus countryside attended by H.E Minister of MSEA, Dr. Kawkab Daya, Governor of Damascus countryside Mr. Zahed Haj Mousa, and other governmental and NGOs, local communities representatives. During the festival a documentary film on BCPAM project activities was presented and a gallery for P.As in Syria. Also the opening of the Syrian P.As photo's exhibition prepared by MSEA, UNDP, Syrian Environmental Association (SEA) for Environment and Syrian Society for Conservation of Wildlife (SSCW).
- 3- The Syrian P.As photo's exhibition prepared by MSEA, UNDP, Syrian Environmental Association (SEA) for Environment and Syrian Society for Conservation of Wildlife (SSCW) continue for more one week in the Environmental Garden managed by Syrian Environmental Association (SEA) .

- 4- Festival day in Sweida Governorate on Feb, 18,2010 commemorating the international year of biodiversity and the declaration of Al Lajat protected area(P.A) in Sweida as a Man and Biosphere protected area by UNESCO and including Al Lajat P.A within the world network of man and biosphere protected areas under the title:

Al Lajat at present and future

H.E. Minister of State for Environment Affairs delivered a speech on the International Year of Biodiversity, and biodiversity importance for mankind. She also focused on the importance and status of protected areas in Syria. Governor of Sweida Mr. Malek Ali talked about the importance of biodiversity and plant genetic resources in Sweida Workshops and training courses:

- 1- The Biodiversity Conservation and Protected Area Management Project which is carried out by the Ministries of State for Environment Affairs and Agriculture and Agrarian Reform, has held two workshops:

- National PAs planning strategy workshop on Feb, 7, 2010 at Semiramis hotel, Damascus aiming at consulting concerned national governmental authorities on PAs planning strategy in the country.

- Consultative workshop scenario planning-strengthening PAs adaptive management Strengthening adaptive Management It is a unique planning approach can be used within complicated, interacted eco, socio-economic conditions to strengthen classic planning methodologies which are unable to predict future development. It was on May, 4-6, 2010 at Semiramis hotel, Damascus aiming at demonstrating the scenario planning as a tool to be used in PAs management planning through determining visions and drivers within drivers matrix and analyzing and understanding interactions also develop assumptions, and alternatives.

- 2- Two workshops (March 4-6, 2010 and April 10-12,2010) on CITES implementation, for staff of Ministry of Environment Affairs and Customs Department at country's border checkpoints. This will help control access and exit of wild life in Syria to ensuring trade control and reducing smuggling and trafficking.

-Train Of Trainers (TOT) course during March, 7-11, 2010 on CITES.

-Workshop on local communities' role in biodiversity conservation, in collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture & Agrarian reform and the Regional Center for Agrarian Reform and Development in the near east (CARDNE). CBD national coordinator,

experts from concerned NGOs and Ministry of Agriculture, and two female experts in women development issues have lectured in the workshop.

Information and publications:

-The logo of the international year of biodiversity is included in all formal correspondences of the Ministry of State for Environment Affairs(MSEA). MSEA asked all Ministries to add the IYB logo in all correspondences.

Documentary film on Biodiversity Conservation and Protected Area Management project (SYR/05/010).

- Issuing an official post stamp, commemorating the international year of biodiversity.
- One hour for international year of biodiversity within the Syrian TV program on Man and Environment.
- In collaboration with Biodiversity Conservation and Protected Area Management Project (SYR/05/010), national P.As data system has been installed. All data and information relating to PAs in the country are introduced and included such as characterization data for each PA (Type, Location, Flora, Fauna, Scientific, and ecotourism activities...). Such data can be analyzed with the help of GIS techniques to help PA management take the right decisions on conservation and sustainability of biodiversity.
- Continuous coverage for the event by press media, Websites newspapers.
- A lot of seminars and lectures on the event carried out by country's governorates, environment directorates, syndicates, and NGOs.

With Best Regards

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