Conservation of Biodiversity in Central Zagros Landscapes

March 2016

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<th>Agency</th>
<th>United Nations Development Program (UNDP)</th>
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<td>Project Title</td>
<td>Conservation of Biodiversity in Central Zagros Landscapes</td>
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<td>Thematic area</td>
<td>Environment</td>
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<td>Partners</td>
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| Donors | • Department of Environment (DoE)  
• United Nations Development Program (UNDP)  
• Global Environment Facility (GEF) |
| Financials | Global Environment Facility (GEF) – US$ 3,000,000  
UNDP – US$ 50,000  
Government of Iran (Parallel Funding) – US$ 5,775,000 |
| Funding required for further activities | US$ 4,000,000 |
| Provinces | Charmahal & Baktiari, Fars, Isfahan, Kohgilouyeh & Boyerahmad |
| Project start date | May 2005 |
| Estimated end date | April 2016 |
| Relevance to SDGs | 5, 15 |

**Project Description**

The Central Zagros Mountains contain globally significant biodiversity. Topographical relief and climatic conditions have led to diverse ecosystems and habitats in the area. This has created a home for a vast range of species, which include over 2,000 species of higher plants and several endangered and endemic mammal species.

However, in recent decades, the biodiversity has been declining and is now highly threatened. This is largely due to demographic changes, changing economic and social systems, and the loss of traditional management and land-use practices.

This Project aims to conserve biodiversity in the Central Zagros Landscape Conservation Zone. The Project works with the agriculture, forestry, rangelands, water and tourism sectors in order to mainstream biodiversity conservation. In so doing, these sectors incorporate conservation and ecological sustainability measures into their own policies, programs and sectoral practices.

The project aims to ensure protection from exploitation and encourage sustainable use of all biodiversity, renewable natural resources and ecological processes.

**Map of Project Locations**
The project involves local communities in directly protecting biodiversity in the Central Zagros region.

What we accomplished

- **Project locations**: Pilot areas were identified through a consultative process.
- **Protection**: Threats to biodiversity were identified. These were analyzed to determine underlying causes of biodiversity decline and to understand potential barriers to inter-sectoral planning of resources management.
- **Protection**: Priority areas for action were determined based on threat analysis in each pilot area.
- **Working groups**: Local Planning Committees have met on a regular basis to determine baseline activities in line with the objectives of the project.
- **Studies**: Ecological and socio-economics baseline studies have been carried out in the Central Zagros Mountains. Pilot ‘Sustainable Livelihoods Projects’ have been implemented.
- **Finance**: Biodiversity Enterprise Grant Schemes have been implemented. These are now being scaled-up.
- **Programmes**: With the support of the project, the Central Zagros Mountain Conservation & Sustainable Development Programme was finalized and submitted to the High Council of Environment (HCE) for approval.
- Obtained initial approval of **Central Zagros Mountain Conservation & Sustainable Development Programme** through the 6th Iran National Development Plan, and submitted to the Iranian Parliament for final approval and budget allocation.

Future funding requirements to:

- Upscale Integrated Participatory Product Practices which have already been piloted by the project as a Sustainable Agriculture model.
- Implement eco-villages in a few pilot villages.
- Implement priority activities identified under the management planning process in the Central Zagros area.
- Implement alternative livelihood projects in the project pilot areas.
- Explore practical methods to be implemented to address the oak die-back disease issue in the Central Zagros Mountains.
- Introduce climate change adaptation practices to the local communities through supporting a few practical model adaptation measures.