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LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES
ARAB ORGANIZATION FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

**GREEN BELTS PROJECT
FOR
DESERTIFICATION CONTROL
IN
ARAB COUNTRIES**

Khartoum, May 1987

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FOR DESERTIFICATION CONTROL
IN ARAB COUNTRIES

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Introduction:

Desertification which has been defined as a combination of processes which result in more or less irreversible reduction of the vegetation cover, leading to the extension of new desert landscapes to area which were formerly not desert, is a phenomena common in arid and semi-arid regions and in all Arab countries with no exception. As a result of the irreversible reduction in the productivity level of the ecosystem in Arab countries, approximately 60 thousand hectares are lost annually, hence it constitutes a serious threat to world food production and to the quality of life and the environment. The phenomena is also characterized by the continuous reduction of soil fertility, encroachment of sand dunes, the acceleration of water and wind erosion, reduction in the ground water levels and the increase of water salinity, the degradation of natural vegetation and forests and the widespread of wild animals in any specific region.

In an effort to combat the problem, the International Conference on Desertification Control was held in Nairobi-Kenya in 1977. The vital importance of green belts as significant measure in controlling desertification was emphasized. As a result, some Arab countries launched several programmes dealt with restoration of degraded lands

and reforestation. Some Arab Organizations such as the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development conducted similar studies.

Difficulties facing Arab countries in Controlling Desertification :

Difficulties facing Arab countries regarding Desertification control are summarized below:-

1. Absence of a well defined strategies necessary of desertification control.
2. Lack of coordination between institutions of the same country responsible for control of desertification and between countries within the same region.
3. Although many Arab countries are not lacking financial resources, meager funds are usually allotted for the control of the problem.
4. Lack of laws and legislations in the field of desertification control.
5. Lack of well trained specialists and technicians.

Project Objectives:

Major project objectives are summarized as follows:

1. To analyze data collected from previously conducted relevant studies.
2. To prepare agro-ecological atlases and natural resources and sand dunes maps in order to identify potential desertification hazard areas.
3. To conduct detailed studies aiming at identifying desertification hazards and suggesting plans, pro-

grammes and strategies to control it taking into consideration prevailing social, economical and environmental factor. Coordination should be emphasized in the programmes.

4. To suggest integrated pilot project and to establish nurseries and seed propagation centres.
5. To secure funds to support research programmes and personnel training.

The following could be achieved as a result of establishing the project:-

1. Degradation of agricultural land, natural pastures and forest will be controlled and natural resources will be conserved.
2. Crop yields and productivity will increase.
3. Animal resources will be ~~prto~~^{ct}ted and its productivity will increase.
4. Reforestation will satisfy demand for fuel wood.
5. Protection against air pollution will be ~~achived~~^{achieved}.
6. Immigration from rural to urban areas will be kept to a minimum.

Project Components:

The project consist of two main portions as follows:-

1. The support of the existing North Africal Arab countries Green Belt Project and establihsment of the

following three proposed projects constitutes the first portion of the National project: Badyat Al-Sham Perimeter Green belt, the Arab peninsula and the African Horn countries green belts.

2. Securing needed infrastructures such nurseries and seed propagation centres, training of staff and offering financial support to seed bank of the Arab centre for the study of Arid zones and Dry lands, constitutes the second portion of the national project.

Project Implementation Plan:-

It is suggested that the project be implemented in three phases as follows:-

(1) FIRST PHASE:

The following should be accomplished during this phase:-

- a. Analysis of data.
- b. Commencement of training programs.
- c. Offer financial support to similar existing projects.
- d. Identify locations of infrastructures .
- e. Appointment of executive manager for Badyat Al-Sham project.
- f. To appoint four committees responsible for the implementation of each of the four projects.
- g. An appointment of the permanent committee for the project is suggested. Such committee is to be headed by a representative from the Arab Fund for economic and social development.

Representative of AOAD, ACSAD, ALESCO will serve as numbers.

The following are the terms of reference of this committee:-

1. To approve work programmes suggested by technical committees.
2. The approval of budget.
3. To coordinate efforts and plans.
4. To follow-up program implementation plans.

The National project consist of four regional projects to cover the following countries:-

- North African countries:-
Consist of Egypt, Morocco, Algèrs, Tunis, Libya and Mauretania.
- Badyat Al Sham countries:-
Consist of Iraq, Kwait, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.
- The Arab Peninsula countries:
Consist of Northern and southern Yemen, Sultanate of Oman, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.
- African Horn Countries:
Consist of Somalia, Djibuti and Sudan.

(2) SECOND PHASE:-

During the second phase the following should be accom

plished:-

- a. To programme implementation strategies and plans.
- b. To appoint execution bodies for the Arab peninsula and African Horn countries green belts.
- c. To conduct move training courses.
- d. To appoint two experts to help in establishing Badyat Al Sham Green Belt.
- e. To start establishment of nurseries and seed propagation centres.

(3) THIRD PHASE:-

In this phase the National Project is to be implemented . This phase is expected to last for four years.

Duration Of Project:-

The first phase is to last for one year and the second phase is suggested to last for two years, and the third phase is to start after that.

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Project Cost:

Table No. (1) summarize cost of project:

TABLE (1) PROPOSED BUDGET
(1000 U.S.Dollars)

ITEM	Phase	P H A S E II		PHASE III
		2nd year	3rd year	4th year-1992
- Study to evaluate existing projects.	130	-	50	100
- Feasibility studies for new projects	200	85	50	50
- Support for North African Green Belt	100	150	200	500
- Support for Badyat Al-Sham Green Belt	150	175	200	500
- Support for Arab Peninsula Green Belt	-	75	200	550
- Support for African Horn Green Belt	-	50	150	500
- Experts	90	185	200	300
- Infrastructure	50	400	750	1000
- Training & publication	150	350	450	550
- Technical bodies for the perminant committee	75	250	350	400
- Technical bodies for regional committees	55	280	400	650
TOTAL	1000	2000	3000	5000