



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Rehabilitating degraded lands and soils prone to wind erosion in the Islamic Republic of Iran

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Eighty five percent of lands in the Islamic Republic of Iran have an arid, semi-arid and hyper-arid environment. The below are some of the characteristics of these lands:

- home to almost 36 million people, 43 percent of the country's population;
- habitat to unique biodiversity, and vital contributor to food security and livelihoods.

However, the long-lasting extreme water scarcity in those areas, combined with extensive soil erosion has created the following challenges in these regions:

- exposing millions of ha of lands to infertility, salinity, and other types of degradations;
- contributing to the formation of a vicious circle of poverty and food insecurity; and
- forcing the rural population to over-exploit their fragile resources for basic needs, which then results in further degradation, poverty and food insecurity.

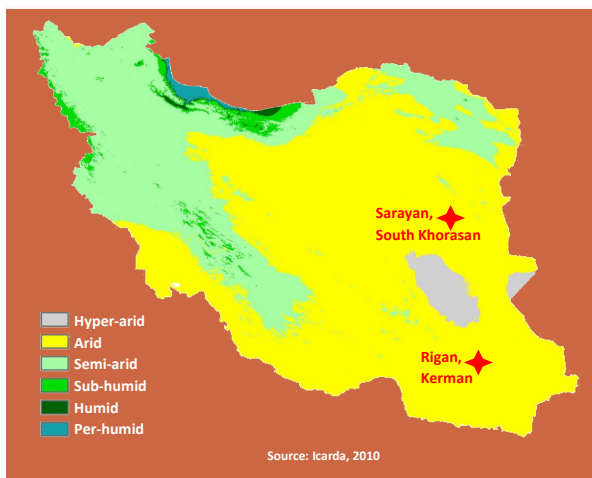
The most visible features of these destructive trends are:

- overgrazing

- unsustainable harvesting of fuelwood; and
- clear-cutting of forests to convert them into rangelands.

Project objectives

- restoring and enhancing biodiversity and the capacity of degraded landscapes in two pilot sites in Kerman and South Khorasan provinces;
- providing sustainable livelihoods, food and nutrition security; and
- combat desertification by mainstreaming environmentally sustainable development approaches.



FAO'S CONTRIBUTION

Leading global efforts in promoting climate-smart and sustainable agricultural and rural development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) supports member countries in their endeavours to develop and adopt policies, programmes and measures that are required for more environment-friendly agricultural practices, and controlling soil erosion and land degradation.

Benefitting from the financial support of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), FAO in collaboration with the Forest, Range & Watershed Management Organization, is implementing the 'Rehabilitation of Forest Landscapes and Degraded Land with Particular Attention to Saline Soils and Areas Prone to Wind Erosion' project in the country to remove key barriers to community-based and integrated Sustainable Land and Forest Management (SLFM). The Organization is focused on (i) strengthening the capacity of local communities and provincial institutions to plan, adopt and evaluate participatory SLFM initiatives at the village and watershed scales; (ii) providing sustainable alternative livelihood options; and (iii) enhancing capacity at the national level to mainstream these approaches into country-wide plans, policies and processes.

PROJECT RESULTS

As of June 2020

- training 200 people on SLFM approaches;
- establishing 20 participatory village resource management councils;
- establishing 15 sustainable community development fund;
- formulating four SLFM village-level plans;
- implementing development projects in 62 pilot villages;
- rehabilitating over 46 000 ha of rangelands in two pilot sites;
- supplying 500 households with energy saving technologies;
- developing 33 sustainable alternative livelihoods initiatives;
- designating one no-hunting area;
- materialising 30 percent decrease in wind erosion in pilot villages;
- establishing one SLFM intersectoral coordination mechanism;
- supporting the revision of relevant national policies to mainstream SLFM.

Partners

This project in the Islamic Republic of Iran is being implemented in close partnership with the Forest, Range & Watershed Management Organization of Iran at the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad, the national counterpart of the project which has the overall responsibility for the management of forests and landscapes in the country.

The project also benefits from the active engagement of Agriculture and Natural Resources Research Center, as well as a number of public and civil society entities, including the Department of Environment and local community-based associations.

Donor and budget

This project is funded jointly by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the GEF, who have allocated over 8 300 000 USD and over 2 600 000 USD for this project, respectively.

Main components of the project

Participatory sustainable land and forest management in arid and semi-arid zones

Development of alternative livelihood initiatives with demonstrated benefits to environmental services

Community-based agroforestry activities on saline soils

Contact

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