

PMNH Darwin Projects:

Al-Makhrour Valley Biodiversity Project Review Minutes Sheet

Sample Biodiversity Meeting minutes (initial and key one for plan)

Meeting/Project Name:	Biodiversity Conservation & Community Development in Al-Makhrour Valley-Bethlehem		
Date of Meeting:	27/8/2019	Time:	12:00-2:30
Meeting Facilitator:	Prof. Qumsiyeh	Location:	PCC Premises

1. Meeting Objective

List of biodiversity conservation targets; discussing the potential habitats and list of species of high conservation value at Al Makhrour Valley with focus on fauna and avifauna components. This meeting came as a response to the meeting that took place on the 19th of August 2019.

2. Attendees

Name	Department/Division	E-mail	Phone
Roubina Ghattas	Pioneer Consultancy Center for Sustainable Development (PCC)	roubina@uems.ps	
Dr. Anton Khalilieh	Nature Palestine Society (NPS)	anton.sunbird@gmail.com	
Elias Handal	BU-PMNH	eliashandal93@gmail.com	

3. Meeting Agenda – discussion – notes- Actions

Topic

- 1- Roubina explained why we need to set biodiversity targets of high conservation value on site and how this will be reflected in the conservation plan. She explained the method and criteria used to identify first the habitats and later the species of high priority for conservation. She also highlighted the necessity to prioritize habitats for conservation while noting the reason behind and interlink it with species inhabiting or growing at the chosen habitats.
- 2- Anton emphasized the importance of the Valley in general noting that the whole valley needs to be conserved, and later identified the habitats of high priority for bird species and accordingly the list of birds to be adopted as conservation target. This was done after thorough presentation from Anton on the site and the findings of the birds' survey he conducted.
- 3- Elias also identified the habitats and species of conservation priority on site and highlighted the areas that need to be conserved referring to the species of importance that inhabit those areas. This was done after explanation from Elias regarding the site and the findings of the animals' survey he conducted.
- 4- In conclusion Roubina, Elias, & Anton agreed on the habitats of high conservation value for plants, animals and birds inhabiting Battir World Heritage Property (WHP). They also agreed on a list of species of relevance.
- 5- Roubina is going to develop the final map showing the agreed-on habitats and send it to Anton and Elias for their final revision.
- 6- Roubina will develop a report regarding the final agreed-on habitats and species of high conservation value at Battir WHP to be later be part of Biodiversity Conservation Plan (BCP).
- 7- Roubina invited Anton and Elias to participate in a meeting that will be held on 5/9/2019 for the purpose of meeting with stakeholders to identify threats, pressures and ecosystem services at Battir WHP in a participatory approach.

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End

Meeting/Project Name:	Biodiversity Conservation & Community Development in Al-Makhrour Valley-Bethlehem Key Stakeholders Meeting – Biodiversity Conservation Plan		
Date of Meeting:	5/9/2019	Time:	9:30-2:30
Meeting Facilitator:		Location:	BU/PMNH Premises

1. Meeting Objective

To meet relevant key stakeholders that manage and/or run activities at Battir World Heritage Site; in an attempt to get the needed feedback for the development of the Biodiversity Conservation Plan in a participatory approach with local community and decision makers. The meeting was aiming to accomplish number of tasks including: (1) identify and discuss the ecosystem services provided by Battir World Heritage Property (Battir WHP) site including Wadi AL Makhrour and its surroundings, (2) identify the challenges and pressures that face the area and their negative impacts, (3) uncover the potential threats that face biodiversity and ecosystems at the studied site, and (4) set recommendations including the planning and institutional framework to adopt and run the plan. This workshop was conducted replacing the 12 interviews that was supposed to be done with the key stakeholders as a step towards building the Biodiversity Conservation Plan (BCP) (as set in the project log frame). The workshop was attended by representatives from related ministries, from village councils and municipalities, representative from elderly farmers, and number of experts in flora, fauna and avifauna who conducted inventories on site. The workshop was found more appropriate to get necessary feedback than an interview at the individual level, the workshop provided a healthy environment that enhanced the discussion among the stakeholders, and opened the opportunity to use the RAPPAM methodology which assists in analyzing the scope, severity, prevalence, and distribution of a variety of threats and pressures, identifying areas of high ecological and social importance and vulnerability, indicating the urgency and conservation priority, uncovering the potential planning and institutional framework and setting recommendations for the site conservation.

2. Attendees

Name	Department/Division	E-mail	Phone
Mrs. Nadia Yasser Mustafa	Representative of Battir Village Council and Hasan Mustafa Cultural Center	-	0598114653
Mr. Hasan Ibrahim Ismae'l Zargoul	Representative of Husan Village Council	-	0522503395
Mr. Issa Yousef Al Shatleh	Representative of Beit Jala Municipality	Fadni999@hotmail.com	0599254707
Mr. Ahmad Abed Al Hameed El Hamamreh	Elderly farmer at Al Makhrour Valley – Husan Village	-	0586628776
Mrs. Marwa Wahib Adwan	Representative of Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA) - World Heritage General Directorate	Marwa.adwan@yahoo.com	0599291115

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Mr. Mohammad Issa Mahassneh	Representative of Environment Quality Authority (EQA) - CBD national Focal Point, Director of Biodiversity & Protected Areas	Mahassneh2000@yahoo.com	0599674796
Dr. Anton Khalilieh	Nature Palestine Society (NPS) – Director General	anton.sunbird@gmail.com	0597492053
Mrs. Roubina Ghattas	Pioneer Consultancy Center for Sustainable Development (PCC) – Director General and Consultant for developing the BCP	roubina@uems.ps	0598310902
Eng. Adel Abu Ayyash	Pioneer Consultancy Center for Sustainable Development (PCC)- Plant Taxonomy expert	-	0599249421
Mohammad Abu A'mrieh	Pioneer Consultancy Center for Sustainable Development (PCC)- Plant Production expert	m.abuamrieh57@gmail.com	0598252182
Dr. Mazin Qumsieh	Palestine Museum of Natural History and Palestine Institute of Biodiversity and Sustainability, Bethlehem University (BU-PMNH/PIBS) - Director General	mazin@qumsiyeh.org	0598939532
Mr. Abdelsalam Al Janazreh	BU-PMNH/PIBS - DI Project Manager	ajanazreh@bethlehem.edu	0562140079
Mr. Elias Handal	BU-PMNH/PIBS - Museum Zoologist & Educational Expert	eliashandal93@gmail.com	0598360181

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3. Meeting Agenda – discussion – notes- Actions	
Topic	
8-	Abdelsalam from PMNH/BU opened the workshop welcoming the attendees at PMNH /BU; highlighting the importance of the session as one output of the DI project.
9-	Roubina welcomed the attendees and asked them to introduce themselves, then she explained the reason behind the meeting and its importance for the development of the BCP (Biodiversity Conservation Plan) as one of the main outcomes of the DI project. She also explained the agenda of the day. She made sure that the attendees understand the purpose behind the BCP and its components. She facilitated three sessions during the day, where necessary feedback and answers on set of indicators were collect (using RAPPAM methodology).
10-	During the first session Roubina started with introducing the targeted site that the BCP is willing to target for conservation purposes; showing maps and photos for the site. She highlighted the biological/natural importance of the site in parallel to its cultural importance, through presenting the site as a national and international KBA, international IBA, and Mediterranean ecosystem supporting Oak Maquis forest and as a WHS (World Heritage Site) with proves for the reasons behind getting all these nominations. She also explained the meaning of biodiversity, ecosystem and ecological processes. During this session Roubina asked Marwa to give a brief about “the Management and Conservation Plan” (MCP) that is already developed and approved by UNESCO and key stakeholders and later explained how the BCP actually complement and respond to the MCP. Marwa emphasized the importance of both the MCP and the BCP. She also explained how MCP was developed and how BCP will be adopted a national plan to conserve the biodiversity of the WHP site. Mohammad Mahassneh emphasized the ecological importance of the site highlighting the importance of Mediterranean forest in Palestine and the region in general. He also focused on the role of EQA in the different nominations, in their relevant national conservation plans and the efforts they do supporting MoTA in protecting the site. Mazin noted that although the name of the site is WHP- Battir but it actually includes AL Makhrour Valley, Battir Village and its agricultural terraces and the valley behind Battir near the train railway, and Wadi AL A’youn valley near Husan village. Later, the attendees also estimated the age of the oldest trees on site (mainly oak and pine trees). Issa said that the municipality has an aerial photo for the site taken in the 1967, where pine and oak trees were growing on site.
11-	During the second session Roubina introduced the RAPPAM methodology and started with filling already translated sheets (into Arabic) with attendees with the purpose of evaluating the targeted site for its socio-economic importance highlighting ecosystem services and for vulnerability of the site. It is worth noting here that the sheets included the indicators set in the RAPPAM added on them other indicators introduced by Roubina to get a broader insight while developing the plan. During this session several discussion took place, especially regarding the mis-utilization of the site especially the rehabilitation works took place on AL Makhrour lands from Beit Jala side, the confiscation of Palestinian lands and the recent attack took place by Israeli Government on the site where a Palestinian house and restaurant were demolished in the core area of WHP on lands of AL Makhrour valley from Beit Jala side. Nadia emphasized the role of Hasan Mustafa in developing the site and conserving the agricultural terraces and his role should be indicated in the plan. She also noted the role of the available water springs on site in developing the site and how the water resources used to be utilized by known families on site who used to irrigate their crops from those springs. Adel sees the importance of studying the geological component of the site especially the old Red El Sulieb Stone that used to be available on site.
12-	During session three Roubina facilitated the session and filled with attendees the pressures and threats sheets, where first the pressures were listed and later evaluated for their severity, extent, impact, and permanence. The attendees also set number of recommendations such as (1) cultivation of certain land pieces along Al Makhrour valley with natural and/or native trees, (2) induce the growth of natural

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vegetation instead of man-made vegetation; by shifting from Pine trees (*Pinus halepensis*) vegetation to natural oak trees and their associated plants, and also to *Pinus Pinae*, (3) rehabilitate the terraces and manatir, (4) conserve landraces and wild relatives, (5) stop utilization of pesticides and chemicals, (6) rehabilitation of water resources where necessary and others. Adel said that the area was subjected to high pressures during the period of 1948 – 1955 (1948 war), as people used to exploit the natural resources such as cutting trees for fuel, collecting seeds and medicinal plants, etc. Anton emphasized that there are number of land confiscations by the Israeli government taking place on site and hence threatening the sustainability of the site, and he also noted that during Ottoman period loss of tree cutting took place to build the train railway. But still the area shows a clear tendency for natural vegetation succession. Ahmad said that the area used to be cultivated more in the past days and people used to take care of their lands better. Nadia highlighted the problem of feral dogs and its negative impact on both humans and nature. All attendees agreed that there is no conservation programs or actions taking place on site, also there is no management actions done on the ground until today. But they are hoping that after endorsing the MCP and BCP, MoTA as main authority body in cooperation with MoA and EQA will run better the site especially after employing a site manager for the site to manage it according to the plans. Mohammad Mahassneh and Adel emphasized the importance of conserving the agro-biodiversity and to be considered while developing the BCP.

13- In conclusion Roubina informed the attendees that the recommendations presented during the sessions will all be taken into consideration and the outputs of the meeting will be developed into a section of the BCP, namely the “pressures and threats that face the targeted site”, upon which the strategic objective and later the plan will be developed in accordance.

End- see attached the list of attendees, and some photos below



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قائمة الحضور

مشروع حفظ التنوع الحيوي وتطوير المجتمع في وادي المخرور - بيت لحم

لتاريخ: 5/9/2019

مكان الورشة: متحف التاريخ الطبيعي / جامعة بيت لحم

لنشاط: ورشة عمل الجهات ذات العلاقة - خطة حفظ التنوع الحيوي لمنطقة التراث العالمي - وادي المخرور و محيطه

الرقم	الاسم	المؤسسة/ المهنة	هاتف	E-mail (اليميل)	التوقيع
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