



The United States Agency for International Development

Iraq Reconstruction: Environmental Protection and Natural Resource Management

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
FACT SHEET

WASHINGTON, DC 20523
PRESS OFFICE
<http://www.usaid.gov>
(202) 712-4320

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The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is committed to environmental protection and improved management of natural resources essential to Iraq's recovery and long-term economic development. USAID, working in close coordination with other U.S. agencies, is planning to address key environmental issues in Iraq by:

- ▶ Improving water and land resources management;
- ▶ Cleaning up rivers through sewerage treatment and improving public health;
- ▶ Strengthening solid waste management;
- ▶ Reclaiming and rehabilitating critical marshlands, rivers and waterways; and
- ▶ Ensuring that USAID humanitarian and development assistance is environmentally sound.

Water Supply and Sanitation. Five million people are at risk from lack of access to safe water and sanitation. In rural areas, less than half of the rural population has access to potable water. In urban centers, pumping of untreated sewage into the Tigris River and waterways is a serious environmental and health concern. USAID will:

- ▶ Carry out a rapid assessment of water supply and sanitation infrastructure for major population centers.
- ▶ Initiate immediate repairs and rehabilitation of water supply and sewerage treatment facilities.

Improved soil and water resources management. Farmers in Iraq are struggling under poor environmental conditions with few tools for coping with pests, drought, salinization, shortages of basic inputs, and lack of appropriate technologies. Land degradation, salinization, and declining crop yields due to mismanagement of land resources and lack of inputs, are serious problems, especially in irrigated lands. USAID will:

- ▶ Support repair and rehabilitation of irrigation networks.
- ▶ Improve water and soil resources management and conservation at the farm and community level.
- ▶ Introduce appropriate conservation and environmental management technologies to reclaim

degraded land.

Wetlands reclamation. The Iraqi regime deliberately and systematically destroyed one of Iraq's key natural resources by draining and destroying the Mesopotamian marshlands. USAID will:

- ▶ Work with other partners to arrest further environmental degradation and begin the restoration of these globally important wetlands.

Environmental Review. To ensure that its humanitarian and development assistance for Iraq is environmentally sound, USAID will:

- ▶ Voluntarily apply its environmental procedures to assure that the environmental consequences of its activities are identified and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted and implemented.
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