



Supporting Wadi El Gemal National Park

The Livelihood and Income from the Environment (LIFE) Red Sea (LRS) Project promotes conservation and biodiversity through strengthening elements of the Wadi El Gemal National Park (WGNP) infrastructure and operations.

The Wadi El Gemal Protectorate was established in 2003 through support provided by the USAID Egyptian Environmental Policy Program. It is 7,450 km², and the area to the south of it (Ras Banas and Gebal Elba) encompasses some of the last remaining pristine terrestrial and marine areas in the Red Sea.

On land, the protectorate includes mountains and wadis as well as endangered flora and fauna. The marine component includes beaches and sites such as Samadai Island (Dolphin House), turtle nesting sites, dugong grazing areas, and unique coral reefs. The park area is mainly used by nomads and fishermen from the Ababda tribe and Upper Egyptian families that have migrated to the area to work in the urban areas or in the mines.

USAID support is protecting these areas and promoting sustainable tourism development that relies on a smaller number of tourists paying a premium for a unique experience in an environmentally interesting destination.

The LRS project is providing technical assistance, training, equipment, and infrastructure to the Rangers of the Natural Conservation Sector of the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency, Ministry of State for the Environment.

LRS is supporting improvements in the lives of the area's inhabitants, providing basic services and promoting handicrafts, small local enterprises, and employment in the emerging tourism industry. A major aim is to provide alternative livelihoods for the Ababda people, protecting

their desert lifestyle and the fragile balance between the desert environment and subsistence economy of the local nomads.

The LRS project is assisting planning and development of tourism-destination sites in the park. These sites are intended to attract tourists to the unique physical, biological and historical features of the park. Money spent by these visitors supports park operations and provides income to local residents.

Partners and stakeholders include: the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA), EEAA's Natural Conservation Sector (NCS), the Red Sea Governorate (RSG), the Tourism Development Authority (TDA), and the Hurghada Environmental Protection and Conservation Association (HEPCA)

