

INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS DATA SHEET
CONCEPT STAGE

Report No.: ISDSC1381

Date ISDS Prepared/Updated: 04-Feb-2013

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I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country:	Tunisia	Project ID:	P132157
Project Name:	TN-Oases Ecosystems and Livelihoods Project (P132157)		
Task Team Leader:	Taoufiq Bennouna		
Estimated Appraisal Date:	24-Feb-2014	Estimated Board Date:	15-Dec-2014
Managing Unit:	MNSEN	Lending Instrument:	Technical Assistance Loan
Focal Area:	Multi-focal area		
Sector:	General agriculture, fishing and forestry sector (40%), General water, sanitation and flood protection sector (40%), Other Renewable Energy (20%)		
Theme:	Biodiversity (20%), Other rural development (20%), Other environment and natural resources management (20%), Water resource management (20%), Climate change (20%)		
Financing (in USD Million)			
Financing Source			Amount
BORROWER/RECIPIENT			0.00
Global Environment Facility (GEF)			5.76
Total			5.76
Environmental Category	B - Partial Assessment		
Is this a Repeater project?	No		

B. Global Environmental Objective(s)

The Project Development Objective/Global Environmental Objective is to improve sustainable natural resources management and promote livelihoods diversification in targeted traditional oases in Tunisia. An integrated and bottom-up development process will be established aiming at strengthening locally led initiatives through a range of institutional measures and investments. By targeting traditional and fragile oasis ecosystems, specific outcomes will include: (a) conserving and promoting biodiversity and fighting land degradation through piloting participatory approach for sustainable oases management at the local level; (b) increasing the efficiency of water management for agriculture; (c) improving the livelihoods of local people, especially women and youth, by diversifying economic activities and creating local jobs; and (d) establishing, with the government, an effective strategy for

sustainable development of the country oases.

C. Project Description

Today, Tunisian oases are suffering from a common set of problems resulting in increasing impoverishment of farmers and of large sections of the communities and increasing damage to the traditional oasis ecosystem. While some of these are common to other rural societies some are specific to the oasis system in the ways that they interact in the impact that they have. Poor marketing opportunities, limited credit, inheritance practices that continually subdivided land holdings and resulted in poor land management, and inappropriate tourist development have increased the over use of natural resources, especially water. This coupled with the breakdown of land management practices has helped to increase salinization, loss of soil fertility, and encroachment of sand. Access to crop and livestock resources to cope with these conditions and the increased pest and disease problems associated with loss of biodiversity are affecting the survival of the oasis farmers. Limited opportunities within the oasis for capacity development, the existence of a number of inappropriate policies and legislative instruments, the low involvement of local population and women in decision process, and the continuing loss of traditional knowledge combined with the absence of a clear strategic vision providing a common framework for traditional oases conservation and sustainable management, constitute the key environmental, economic and social problems faced by traditional oasis.

The proposed project seeks to support the development of a coherent and comprehensive national strategy for sustainable management of traditional oasis ecosystems, which would be conducive to a set of initiatives aimed at supporting and improving the specific ecosystem services that these systems provides, the conservation and enhancement use of the genetic diversity and improving livelihoods of people living in traditional oases. These initiatives will be implemented through a participatory approach aiming at establishing new niches for growth and employment. Local stakeholders will be effectively included in planning and implementation processes to support livelihood improvement. The aim will be to develop and pilot new dynamic participatory approach that enhances the resilience of the traditional oasis ecosystem.

The proposed project builds on existing experiences gained from other projects operating in similar ecosystems (in MENA region, in general, and in Tunisia, in particular). It would mainly complement, on one hand, the activities of the Water-Saving Agriculture Project in Southern Oasis Area (APIOS2) whose objective is to secure stable irrigation water, by developing tertiary irrigation and drainage channels in the oases in South Tunisia; and in another hand, the activities of the National program of planting and reforestation in Tozeur and Kebeli, which aims to protect these governorates oases and infrastructure by mechanical and biological control activities against sand and land degradation.

The project will concentrate on selected oasis which will be chosen during the project preparatory phase according to set of criteria such as bio-physical risks, food insecurity, poverty, environmental degradation, and vulnerability to severe weather conditions and the willingness and adherence of local population to promote SLWM and innovative economic activities.

The project will consider the specific roles and needs of men and women at all stages of project design and execution, setting forth clear objectives concerning the integration and participation of women, and young people, in local development dynamics, especially with reference to access to extension, advisory and support services, training, sources of financing, and participation in rural organizations and local cooperation agencies. An overall strategy for integrating women and young people will be adopted to allow them to participate in projects on an equal footing and where necessary - to overcome constraints that are specific to them.

The proposed project would consist of the following three components:

- Component 1: Strengthening capacities for sustainable management of oasis ecosystems
- Component 2: Making investments to support SLWM practices and promote livelihoods diversification

- Component 3: Project coordination and management

Component 1: Strengthening capacities for sustainable management of oasis ecosystems

This component will support institutional strengthening, improving enabling environments to scale up sustainable land and water management in oasis ecosystems, elaborate national strategy for sustainable management of oasis ecosystems, and build national and local level capacities to implement, harmonize and coordinate investments and policies sustaining oasis natural capital and livelihoods of local communities. The expected set of activities to be financed under this component are as follow:

Sub-component 1.1: Development of a national strategy for sustainable management of oasis ecosystems including Participative Development Plans (PDP) of selected oasis: the strategy and the PDPs will be elaborated based on several analytical works focusing on: (i) acquired knowledge on oasis development; (ii) Social analysis of oasis; (iii) Ecological and natural capital evaluation of oasis ecosystems; (iv) Institutional and Governance analysis including land tenure and water access; (v) Economic situation and potential of oasis production systems in term of diversification, promotion of innovative activities and jobs creation. Based on the results and findings of the above analytical studies, an integrated national strategy for sustainable management of oasis ecosystems will be elaborated by spelling out the conditions concerning its implementation. In parallel, for each selected oasis, a Participative Development Plan (PDPs) will be developed. A Communication plan for the dissemination and the implementation of these tools will be developed. Several workshops will be organized at national, regional and local levels to present main results of research and studies undertaken and adopt the national strategy for sustainable management of oasis ecosystems as well as the PDPs of the selected oasis.

Sub-component 1.2: Strengthening the capacities of all stakeholders to ensure the sustainable management of oasis ecosystems: (i) Strengthen the capacities of the national institutions (DGEQV, DGF, CRDAs) involved in the management/coordination of the project and the implementation of its various components; (ii) Strengthen the capacities of local governments (Governorates and Delegations) in mainstreaming SLWM and alternative livelihoods into their respective development plans and investment budgets, (iii) Building the capacities and skills of local stakeholders (local communities, including douar organizations, professional groups, producer groups and particularly women's groups and youth associations) in developing and implementing the PDPs including diversified livelihoods activities (handicraft, manufacturing of jams (dates and oasis fruits); packaging for dates (with traceability of production); implementation of innovative nursery techniques; shredding system for palm waste, etc.); (v) Organization of general sensitization, social mobilization and information activities for oasis populations (including members of joint interest groups, farmers' groups, civil society associations and national NGO).

Sub-component 1.3: Monitoring and evaluation. This sub-component will concern the establishment and implementation of a coherent system to monitor and evaluate the implementation of project activities. Monitoring progress should draw on groups of indicators which describe and track changes in: (i) productivity in the use of environmental assets and natural resources; (ii) the natural asset base; (iii) the environmental dimensions of quality of life; (iv) policy responses and economic opportunities. The system will be designed and managed in close collaboration with other projects currently operating in the areas of biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management in the same geographic areas.

Component 2: Making investments to implement the PDPs

The eligible investments will concern particularly community-led initiatives (or sub-projects) that will have the potential to address social, economic and environmental challenges and open up new sources of growth through the following activities: (i) rehabilitate degraded oasis areas; (ii) Support

Agriculture conservation practices and sustainable use and management of natural resource, (iii) Biodiversity conservation practices including the creation of tree garden biodiversity and in situ regeneration of endangered species and local seed production; (iii) Make investment in innovative and adaptive practices and technologies for sustainable soil fertility and water management; (iv) encourage initiatives aimed at supporting alternative livelihoods; (v) Build facilities and community infrastructures in targeted areas to favor alternative livelihoods, etc.

In the field of Livelihoods diversification, the project is likely to promote a number of activities, in particular the following: (i) Support community-based initiatives and services aimed at protecting natural resources and biodiversity; (ii) Development of activities supporting high quality handcraft; (iii) Identification and funding of biodiversity-friendly business development opportunities at community level; (iv) Development of activities aimed at creating new economic opportunities (e.g., Creation of Compost station from palm date waste and the development of ecological agriculture and , ecotourism, cuniculture, ensilage, etc.).

In the field of Sustainable land and water management practices, the project will support the dissemination and adoption, among others, of the following activities: (i) Soil conservation techniques; (ii) Crop management practices; (iii) Arboriculture sustainable practices; (iv) Water harvesting initiatives; (v) Improved livestock management activities; (vi) Community and local private sector based natural regeneration and rural renewable energy services (to contribute in the reduction of land degradation in the targeted areas); Etc.

Component 3: Project coordination and management

This component will support the establishment and management of a fully-functioning Project Management Unit (PMU) within the DGEQV of the ME. It will cover the cost equipment for the PMU and consulting services.

D. Project location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)

The identification of the project oasis sites will be carried out during the project preparatory phase by using a set of parameters, such as bio-physical risks, food insecurity, poverty, environmental degradation, vulnerability to severe weather conditions and the willingness and adherence of local population to promote SLWM and innovative economic activities.

The project may finance small-scale physical investments within targeted areas (including habitat, roads, gravel roads ...). As the exact sub-project types locations would not be known at the time of appraisal, an Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF) will be prepared by the Government.

An environmental and social screening process to guide the selection of subsequent sub-projects will be elaborated and included in the ESMF. The final ESMF will be included in the project's Operational Manual.

Also, during project implementation, an environmental and social management plan (ESMP) acceptable to the Bank, will be prepared for each sub-project identified during the project implementation.

E. Borrowers Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies

The project executing agency is the General Directorate of the Environment and Quality of Life (DGEQV) of the Ministry of Environment (ME). DGEQV coordination activities will include, among others, the management of staff and equipment, the organization of the work of national and international consultants, procurement, organization of joint supervision missions, etc.

The mission of the DGEQV, created by the decree n. 93-303 of February 1, 2003, is to prepare general environmental assessments, propose key orientations of national policy on the protection of the environment and the improvement of the quality of life, and the formulation of the action plans for the conservation of natural resources. Its organizational structure includes three Directorates, among them the Directorate of Nature Conservation and Rural areas, which has an outstanding experience in managing initiatives related to nature conservation and rural and agricultural environment. The DGEQV is highly qualified to execute the project, especially since it is already implementing the 'Ecotourism and Desert Biodiversity Conservation Project' and it has regional branches (particularly in Tozeur and Kebili). Moreover, the DGEQV staffs are fully familiar with Bank environment safeguard policies and have overseen the environmental and social issues related to these projects. The project team will receive a capacity enhancement program on OP4.12, on the purpose to help them to mitigate the project social related impacts and the preparation of the PDPs.

F. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Abdoul-Wahab Seyni (MNSSD)

Andrew Michael Losos (MNSSEN)

II. SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY

Safeguard Policies	Triggered ?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	Yes	The project may finance small-scale physical investments within targeted areas (including habitat, roads, gravel roads ...). As the exact sub-project types locations would not be known at the time of appraisal, an Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF) will be prepared by the Government. An environmental and social screening process to guide the selection of subsequent sub-projects will be elaborated and included in the ESMF. The final ESMF will be included in the project's Operational Manual. Also, during project implementation, an environmental and social management plan (ESMP) acceptable to the Bank, will be prepared for each sub-project identified during the project implementation
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	Yes	The ESMF will include measures to incorporate this OP
Forests OP/BP 4.36	No	
Pest Management OP 4.09	No	
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	Yes	The ESMF will include measures to incorporate this OP
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	No	
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	Yes	Although the targeted areas are in the public

		domain, and as the project will finance small-scale physical investments within targeted areas (including habitat, roads, gravel roads) and for some investment sustainability, it may potentially led to community restriction of access which may triggered the OP 4.12. PF will be prepared for this purpose and mitigation measures will be prepared and included within the PDPs which should be shared with the bank prior to the implementation.
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	TBD	Any activity involving cross-border groundwater could trigger this policy. More will be known about precise project activities at the appraisal stage.
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	

III. SAFEGUARD PREPARATION PLAN

Tentative target date for preparing the PAD Stage ISDS:

A. 24-May-2013

Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed.

B. The specific studies and their timing should be specified in the PAD-stage ISDS.

TBC

IV. APPROVALS

Task Team Leader:	Name: Taoufiq Bennouna	
<i>Approved By:</i>		
Regional Safeguards Coordinator:	Name:	Date:
Sector Manager:	Name:	Date:

¹ Reminder: The Bank's Disclosure Policy requires that safeguard-related documents be disclosed before appraisal (i) at the InfoShop and (ii) in country, at publicly accessible locations and in a form and language that are accessible to potentially affected persons.