

2005-2007 Plan of Action Pursuant to the U.S.-Morocco Joint Statement on Environmental Cooperation

The Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco (“the Governments”), recognizing the importance of protecting the environment while promoting sustainable development in concert with the expanded bilateral trade and investment ties accompanying the U.S.-Morocco Free Trade Agreement, have, through the Working Group on Environmental Cooperation (“the Working Group”), developed the following Plan of Action (“Plan”) pursuant to the U.S.-Morocco Joint Statement on Environmental Cooperation (the “Joint Statement”).

I. BACKGROUND:

The Annex to the Joint Statement identifies the following as priorities for environmental cooperation between the United States and Morocco with the goal of improving Morocco’s ability to protect the environment by building human and institutional capacity in management and conservation of natural resources:

- a) Strengthening the capacity to develop, implement and enforce environmental laws and regulations;
- b) Encouraging the development of incentives and voluntary mechanisms to contribute to the achievement and maintenance of high levels of environmental protection;
- c) Promoting opportunities for public participation in environmental protection efforts and improving public access to information and access to justice on environmental issues;
- d) Protecting coastal environmental zones and estuaries and preventing the over-exploitation of fisheries resources;
- e) Safeguarding important natural resources, such as water, and protected areas in Morocco; and

f) Promoting the growth of the environmental-technology business sector.

II. MUTUALLY-IDENTIFIED GOALS

At the October 2004 Working Group meeting, and through a subsequent on-going exchange of phone calls and electronic mail, the Working Group has developed and is putting forward the following Plan of Action, incorporating activities to be pursued during the period 2005-2007, including activities that are currently underway, in the planning stages, or proposed. The Working Group intends to review progress toward achieving the objectives of this Plan in future consultations to assess cooperative environmental activities undertaken pursuant to the Joint Statement. *The objectives and activities set forth in this Plan may be updated and modified by future consultations between the Governments, and the implementation of activities is contingent upon the availability of funding and other resources from the Governments and other sources.*

a) Strengthening the capacity to develop, implement and enforce environmental laws and regulations:

Develop within the Moroccan Ministry of Environment and other relevant agencies an effective program to address environmental challenges in the textile sector, with the goal of improving all elements of an effective environmental protection system including laws, regulations, standards, norms, environmental impact assessment, institutions, monitoring, enforcement capacity, organization, staff training and management.

Conduct a workshop on Principles of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

Conduct a workshop on Principles of Environmental Impact Assessment Review and train Moroccan trainers.

Host a study tour to the United States for Moroccan Environment Ministry officials.

Use the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE) enforcement conference to foster greater cooperation between environment and law enforcement ministries, including through a senior-level meeting of key U.S. and Moroccan officials.

Provide technical assistance to the National Laboratory of the Environment (LNE) for assessments of possible infractions of environmental laws and regulations.

Provide training on the use of the internet for chemical and pesticide management (Chemicals Information Exchange Network – CIEN) under a United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Chemicals and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) cooperative project.

Enhance compliance with Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) obligations by assisting Morocco with its National Legislation Project.

b) Encouraging the development of incentives and voluntary mechanisms to contribute to the achievement and maintenance of high levels of environmental protection, either through information-sharing or specific projects:

Sponsor a workshop on the “Use of Economic Incentives for Environmental Decision Making”

Provide technical assistance in promoting clean vehicle technology.
Share information about methods to monitor health effects of environmental conditions.

c) Promoting opportunities for public participation in environmental protection efforts and improving public access to information and access to justice on environmental issues:

Host a workshop on capacity building for non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

d) Protecting coastal environmental zones and estuaries and preventing the over-exploitation of fisheries resources:

Provide technical assistance for the Government of Morocco's plan to eliminate use of driftnets in the Mediterranean Sea.

Provide assistance using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to map risks, identify coastal hazards and map coastal decline and urbanization.

Develop a National Program of Action through the U. S. Department of Commerce National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to address land-based sources of pollution and reduce/control coastal degradation. Through this program, develop economical and financial instruments for the recovery of coasts in the context of sustainable ecotourism development.

e) Safeguarding important natural resources, such as water, and protected areas in Morocco:

Continue U.S.-Morocco dialogue on enhanced access, distribution and use of the Global Landsat data set that the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) have made available to Morocco for monitoring environmental change.

Provide technical assistance on improving water quality and wastewater reuse.

Engage in capacity-building for protected area management, natural resource management, wildfire prevention and response, and ecotourism development in and around protected areas of Morocco.

Enable Moroccan participation in a regional workshop in Tunisia on water reuse and water-related agricultural practices.

Conduct a feasibility study on a wastewater treatment facility for Moroccan olive oil factories to serve as a blueprint for the handling of wastewater throughout the Sebou River watershed and other olive oil producing areas.

Search for funds to implement a pilot project for oasis conservation.

f) Promoting the growth of the environmental-technology business sector:

Provide technical assistance on attaining ISO 14,001 certification in order to improve environmental management by business.

Collaborate on a study of environmental services in Morocco.

Work together to advance the environmental goods negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO) under Paragraph 31(iii) of the Doha Declaration.

III. BENCHMARKS

As the Working Group further defines cooperative programs, projects and activities under its Plan, it intends to strive to identify performance indicators and benchmarks to measure appropriately the progress made in accomplishing or otherwise furthering the goals and objectives of such programs, projects and activities and to facilitate public reporting of that progress. To the degree that the Governments use independent sources of monitoring data and evaluation to assess progress, they intend to collaborate with those other sources in identifying suitable performance indicators and benchmarks.

IV. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Through their participation in the Working Group, the Governments intend to seek and consider input from relevant local, regional and international organizations regarding relevant environmental conditions and indicators and views on the utility of cooperation under this Plan. The Governments also plan to encourage public participation in setting goals for and implementing environmental collaboration, and to make information on activities carried out under the Joint Statement available to the public on a regular basis. As part of their regular consultations of the Working Group under the Joint Statement, the Governments plan to establish benchmarks and indicators in order to evaluate progress made toward meeting the goals established under the Plan.

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OF THE
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