

**Process Framework for Involuntary Restrictions**

**9 October 2018**

**Jabal Moussa Biosphere Reserve**

Prepared by the Association for the Protection of Jabal Moussa,

in the context of project

**CEPF Grant 108784**

Friends of Nature

**CONSERVING LEBANON ENDEMIC FLORA THROUGH COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT**

## **A. Project background**

Include here a brief blurb about FoN project, something like

The activities in the Jabal Moussa will be implemented in the context of a wider project, led by Friends of Nature (LEB-108784), with contributions and expertise from Université Saint-Joseph under project LEB-108497). The general project's objective is to adopt a participatory conservation planning approach in developing appropriate conservation plans for the selected areas identifying the status, structure and management framework, in what ensures the long-term preservation of the floral biodiversity. This approach will effectively tackle issues related to protection of the key habitats and species within the addressed KBAs, and the conservation of the integrity of the whole ecosystem. The FoN project tackles the issue of conserving some of Lebanon's endangered plant species in four sites in 3 Key Biodiversity KBAs – one of which being Jabal Moussa Biosphere Reserve, for which FoN will work extensively with the Association for the Protection of Jabal Moussa (APJM), as the organization in charge of the management of the protected area.

Jabal Moussa is part of KBA LBN07: Keserwan - Jabal Mousa.

The area of Jabal Moussa and surrounding villages is a UNESCO-designated Biosphere Reserve since 2009, located in Keserwan-Jabal Mousa KBA (LBN 07). It covers a surface of 6500 hectares in this KBA, at altitudes ranging between 350 meters in the North-West and 1,700 meters to the South-East. It was designated a Global Important Bird Area by BirdLife International in 2008.

Jabal Moussa Biosphere Reserve (JMBR) presents a remarkable biodiversity; it is home to at least 727 flora species, out of which 26 are endemic to Lebanon, and several endemic to Jabal Moussa and surroundings.

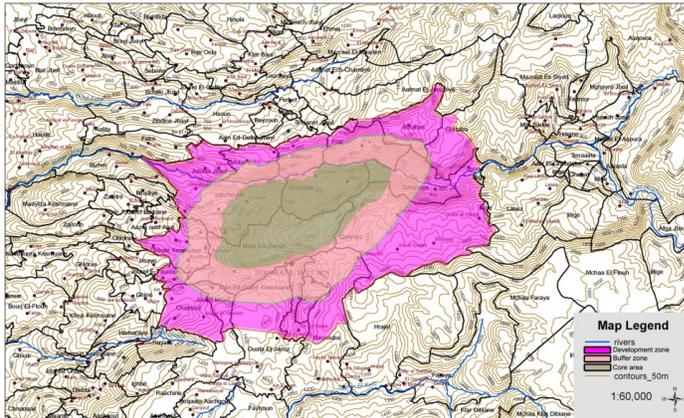
Since its establishment in 2007, the Association for the Protection of Jabal Moussa (APJM), managing body of JMBR, instigated conservation measures and development initiatives. Results include the establishment of a community-based ecotourism infrastructure for visitor use, development of native tree nurseries to preserve valuable endemic species, socio-economic development through production and marketing of local products, acquisition of new levels of legal protection, capacity-building of local communities, knowledge-base acquisition about the site through scientific research, and promotion of the site's values.

The site's endemic flora species have been identified. However, species-specific surveys, monitoring and conservation actions had not taken place, and current management practices do not integrate conservation requirements of the endemic species.

The project will enhance the conservation of four endemic species: *Cyclamen libanoticum*, *Salvia peyronii*, *Paeonia kesrouanensis* and *Erica sicula libanotica* through thorough assessment studies, monitoring, and conservation plans.

## **B. Description of the area and socio-economic context**

## Zonation Map Jabal Moussa Zones



Jabal Moussa is located in Keserwan district, at 50 Km from Beirut. The core area is bounded by two rivers: a seasonal river, Nahr ed Dehab, and a perennial river, Nahr Ibrahim. The surrounding community is characterized by its strong bond to the nature that surrounds it, and the rural setting, but is also affected by their proximity to urban areas. Agriculture, farming, and related activities, represent the most important socio-economic sector. The agriculture sector becoming unprofitable, and with the lack of other job opportunities, people either move to the cities where job opportunities are available, or remain unemployed.

A significant part of the core is under the direct management of APJM, and consists of a Mediterranean forest with great diversity in landscape, floral coverage, and density. The main activity taking place in the forest is ecotourism: visitors of the reserve can walk on delineated hiking paths, with basic infrastructure, often accompanied by local guides. No other activity is allowed in the protected area.

The conservation stance has led to the generation of several job opportunities, and a large number of households today rely on the visitors of the reserve for income generation.

While grazing is not allowed on lands managed by APJM, a non-formulated agreement with local shepherds exists, allowing goat herds to pass once seasonally during transhumance.

Nevertheless, goats and cows are sometimes encountered in the core area outside the transhumance timeframe.

Collection of wild plants occurs mostly at the edges of the reserve, nearby the villages, and not in the protected forest.

### **C. Participatory implementation**

Since its establishment, APJM has been in direct contact with the different forest users, including shepherds and beekeepers, and has been managing the visits to Jabal Moussa for 9 years.

Due to the geographically-focused and human-centered work of APJM, direct and individual links have been created between APJM team, who is mostly comprised of local members, and the local stakeholders, including:

- Forest users: beekeepers, shepherds, plant collectors... as well as visitors in general (not particularly local)
- Women producing agro-food and artisanal products: their products are developed in collaboration with APJM, and marketed under the brand name of “Jabal Moussa”
- Ecotourism stakeholders: 20 guides; 6 guards (hired as full-time staff); 6 guesthouse owners; camping site owners around the Reserve (who signed agreements with APJM)
- Schools, youth groups, and women groups... who have actively participated in educational and awareness activities.

APJM has also been working in close cooperation with relevant public institutions, such as the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Environment, and the local municipalities.

Each group of stakeholders will be involved in the project implementation according to its interest and the relevance of the project activities to its scope of work.

Awareness raising activities planned will target schools, youth groups and women groups. Development of the activities is usually coordinated with the group leaders or the schoolteachers.

Guards and guides will be involved in the training and field assessments done by experts, and already the majority of guides have expressed its interest in gaining botanical skills. Visitors, whether locals or not, will be invited to identify the endemic species and their importance in the flora educational gardens at the entrance, and an explanation will be provided as to the importance of conserving these species, and taking care as to not harvest or trample on them. If advised by experts, hiking trails will be redirected.

Had observed impacts of grazing been raised as a risk on the species conservation, a transhumant action plan will be co-developed by APJM, the experts and the shepherds.

Results of the studies will be communicated to the relevant municipalities and ministries, to take note of the outputs within national and local strategies, and, if possible, include endemic species in national regulations.

#### **D. Criteria for eligibility of affected persons**

It is worth mentioning that none of the affected persons has a formal legal right, or recognized claim, over protected lands that are part of the core area of the reserve.

Access to the protected area is rather restricted, and visitors as well as locals are aware of the regulations in place; however, clandestine uses might occur. For instance, visitors might choose to collect the beautiful endemic flowers for ornamental purposes. These are not considered as affected persons, but measures of prevention of such acts will be taken by APJM.

Any local or non-local that purposefully attempts to bring harm to biodiversity, illegally, for blackmail or for leisure (for instance, leisure hunting), is not considered as affected person.

On the other hand, APJM recognizes the need for seasonal transhumance of local shepherds, from the lands above the protected area to those below. Had grazing been deemed as putting the conservation status of the endemic species (or other species) at risk, transhumance routes need to be redrawn in collaboration with the local shepherds, to keep the most vulnerable areas and

species protected. No compensation is foreseen as the redrawn of transhumance routes will be the result of a participatory approach and would not lead to a loss of revenue for shepherds.

#### **E. Measures to assist the affected persons**

As described above, local shepherds who are in need of transhumance are considered the only group who might be affected by new regulatory measures, compared with the existing “non-formal agreement” with APJM, allowing them to move from one area to the other, seasonally, on their own transhumant paths.

Studies of experts will clarify if redirection of these paths will be required. In this case, the local shepherds will be consulted to develop a new path workable for them, approved by experts, and endorsed by APJM.

#### **F. Conflict resolution and complaint mechanism**

As explained above, APJM is in direct contact with the local communities, who simply contact the staff or visit APJM’s office to present a request or a complaint. Complainants are asked to write down their comments or are assisted to do so. Visitors usually send their feedback through an online sheet.

All complaints are studied committedly by APJM. When a conflict arises, and when required, a third party is called upon to assist in facilitating the resolution. The third party is often someone local who is acquainted with APJM’s mission and the local’s demands.

In the scope of this project, the same methodology will be used. All complaints will be recorded in writing. If a conflict arises, a third party (preferably a local) will be called upon to mediate the solution.

During the implementation of the project activities, their relation to the CEPF programme and donors will be explained, and the possibility of reaching out to the secretariat mentioned. A roll-up banner will be developed for the project and showcased during the implementation of the activities. The banner will include an A5 box indicating the possibility to raise complaints and reach out to CEPF, including the addresses of the RIT Programme Officer (Sharif Jbour), the Grant Director (Pierre Carret) and the possibility to raise the complaint to CEPF Secretariat or the national World Bank office.

In the highly improbable case where the project activities themselves are generating complaints, and the normal procedure is not leading to a resolution, the written complaints will be sent to the Regional Implementation Team and the CEPF Grant Director within 15 days. If the claimant is not satisfied following the response, they may submit the grievance directly to the CEPF Executive Director at [cepfexecutive@conservation.org](mailto:cepfexecutive@conservation.org) or by surface mail. If the claimant is not satisfied with the response from the CEPF Executive Director, they may submit the grievance to the World Bank at the local World Bank office.

#### **G. Implementation Arrangements**

All efforts will be made so as to include all of the potentially affected persons in the developed action plans. APJM will provide the necessary contacts and information to the experts.

Prior to the development of the final conservation plan, affected people (if any) will be consulted during the drafting of the actions relevant to them. All points discussed during the meetings will be formulated in “minutes of meetings”. When clear actions are agreed upon, the final plan will be developed, integrating the needs of affected people as well as the agreed upon actions.

The above will be reported regularly to CEPF as part of the semi-annual performance reports.