

Process Framework for Involuntary Restrictions

Zone of Makmel / Village of Bcharri

9 October 2018

CEPF Grant 108784

Friends of Nature

**CONSERVING LEBANON ENDEMIC FLORA THROUGH COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

CEPF Grant 108497

Université Saint Joseph

CONSERVER ET VALORISER LE PATRIMOINE BOTANIQUE UNIQUE DU LIBAN

Grant Summary

1. Grantee organization: The Friends of Nature and Université Saint Joseph.
2. Grant title: **CONSERVING LEBANON ENDEMIC FLORA THROUGH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, AND CONSERVER ET VALORISER LE PATRIMOINE BOTANIQUE UNIQUE DU LIBAN.**
3. Grant number: CEPF-108784 & 108497
4. Grant amount (US dollars): 154,860 + 135,035 = 289,895 US \$
5. Proposed dates of grant: October 2018 – October 2020
6. Countries or territories where project will be undertaken: Orontes Valley and Levantine Mountains
7. Date of preparation of this document: 9 October 2018.

A. Project background

This area is part of KBA Mount Makmel and Upper Kadisha Valley.

The project site comprises the mountainous reaches overtopping village Bcharri extending to the high summits within this cadastral zone. Village Bcharri has the largest cadastral expanse in the region falling on the western slopes of Mount Lebanon and reaching the crests of the summits, which include Jabal Makmel and Qornet es Sawda. The summits landscape is a habitat to many of Lebanon's endemics and some are of restricted distribution to these summits only since they constitute the highest pinnacles of Lebanon reaching to altitude of 3083m asl.

In this immense landscape, conservation activities will center on the following selected species due to their state of threat and endemism. They will constitute flagship species for the protection of an array of highly valued biodiversity as well. Floral species targeted in this KBA include:

Senecio blanchei Soldano

Myopordon pulchellum (Winkl. & Barbey) Wagenitz

Marrubium globosum subsp. *libanoticum* (Boiss.) P.H.Davis

Iris cedretii Dinsm. ex Chaudhary

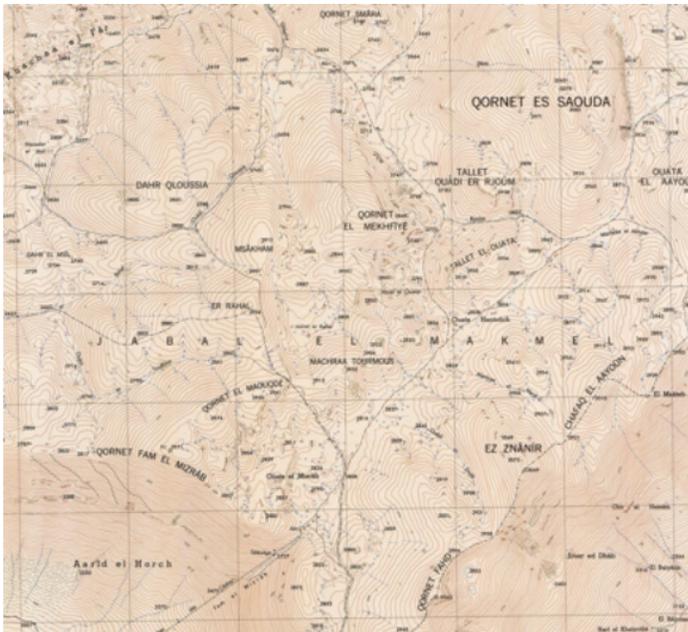
As a part of projects 108784 (FoN) & 108497 (USJ), the two partners intend to support effective conservation of the above species. To reach this objective, the two organizations will combine several conservation approaches from micro-reserves in private lands and marginal agricultural lands to 'nature site' status for municipal and public land as a first stage to develop later for a 'nature reserve'. It is to be noted that conservation of the above species and their habitats will extend similar benefits to a range of other endemics.

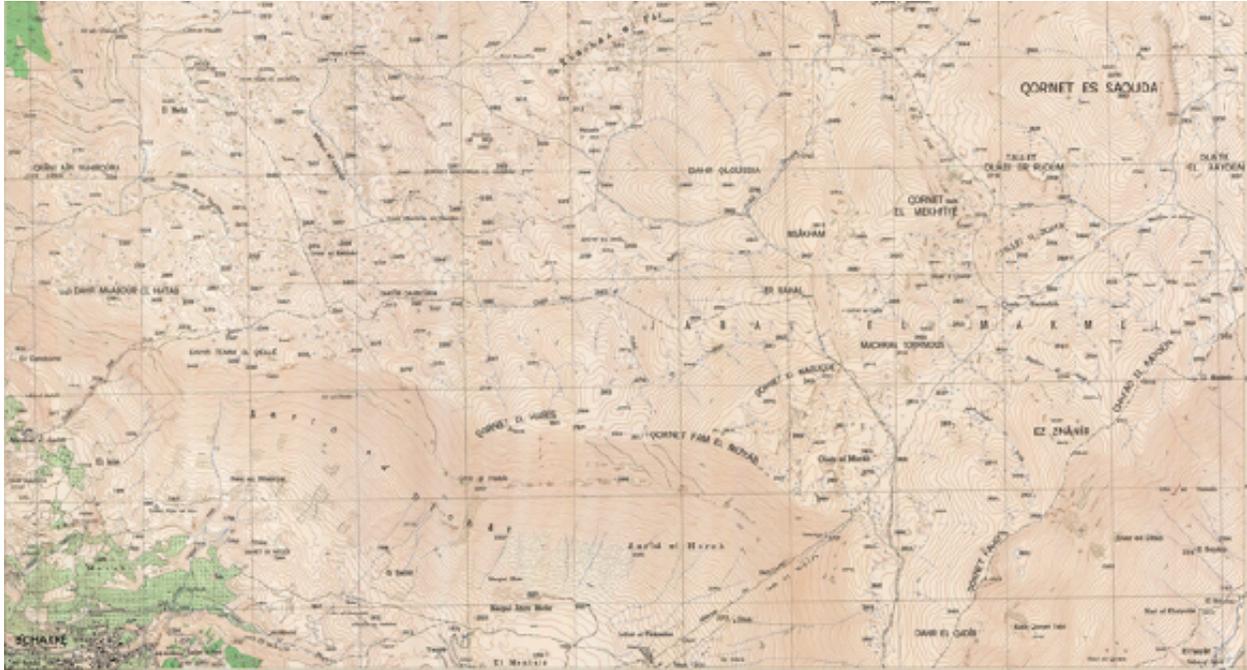
More specifically,

- FoN will be in charge of "improving conservation of SRE in Makmel heights of Mount Makmel and upper Kadisha valley KBA", through the following activities:
 - stakeholder sensitization: which will be attained through individual interactions and series of meetings with heads of local authorities (municipality, mayor..), key and influential social figures, and heads of CSOs, NGOs, and groups.
 - botanical training: a one-day workshop will be designed and delivered to stakeholders and institutional members of the KBA at one of the villages or municipalities, all in collaboration with USJ.
 - hands-on botanical training: the trained stakeholders and institutional members will follow a hands-on training in the fields joining FON field survey team on field assessments of their

- endemics.
 - SRE field exploration and mapping: will be conducted throughout the growth season to assess the status in the wild of the selected SRE species. Field survey data will be analyzed to map the species.
 - Stakeholder capacity building: a one-day workshop designed first to build stakeholder capacity to recognize conservation measures, then engender their participation at tailoring best conservation approaches to their endemics based on the field surveys (with Dr. Magda)
 - Site conservation planning: in coordination with the concerned stakeholders/owners on the terrain and in collaboration with the trained stakeholders to finalize a conservation measure.
 - Networking with other conservation modules for future collaboration and exchange of information and success stories either through visit to another reserve or through a workshop.
- USJ will focus on “ Etude de faisabilité pour une micro-réserve à Bcharré, réalisée de manière participative avec les parties prenantes »
- Rapports scientifiques d'inventaire et cartographie
- Field survey et cartographie des Iris de Bcharré
- Rapports des réunions avec les parties prenantes sur les options de gestion et les possibilités d'établissement de micro-réserve"
- Reunions avec les différents stakeholders impliqués dans la création de la PMR pour *Iris cedretii*
- Plan d'action pour les parties prenantes affectées (éventuellement), intégré dans le draft de plan de gestion.
- Réunions de consultation avec les locaux et préparation d'un plan d'action.
- Dossier complet remis au Ministère de l'Environnement
- Préparation du cadre fonctionnel de la PMR, obtention de l'approbation du CEPF et soumission au ministère de l'environnement

B. Description of the Area and socio-economic context





MAP OF MAKMEL AREA AND ITS RELEVANCE TO BCHARRI VILLAGE

The Makmel area is already a resort area where visitors and tourists come for skiing activities in winter and for good weather in summer. A good part of the local communities in the nearing villages live in their villages throughout the year; they rely on visitors for a large part of their income. The area has a substantial infrastructure for tourism with hotels, restaurants, roads, etc. Local communities are also initiated on nature protection in designated areas through the protection of the cedar grove in Bcharri; they also know the socio-economic potentials and activities associated with protection. The conservation activities in Makmel through this project will add another attraction to the existing socio-economic cycle and is estimated to be well welcome by the local communities since it enhances and enlarges the nature-based activities.

Beside benefiting from agreeable climatic conditions and beauty of the landscape in tourism, natural resources are directly utilized particularly in grazing. Herds of goats and sheep settle in these mountain zones from May till October-November; after every winter, herdsmen return to the heights on annual journeys to roam the expanses with their livestock. Thus, Makmel mountain vegetation has been subject to decades of overgrazing. Conservation activities might and might not be responded to positively from the herdsmen side, because it would put constraints on their movement and sources of food. Yet the areas of these heights are immense and can accommodate reallocation of herdsmen activities.

As to recreational activities, the largest percentage of tourists is focused on entertainment areas circling around restaurants, hotels and the cedar grove. Some infringe on the roadsides for picnics. Rarely, tourists in the area venture into nature on trail hikes, they are mostly centered around the cedar grove. In recent years, 4x4 tracking has grown into a countryside and high mountain activity; vehicles do not confine drives to dirt roads but climb on hillsides and traverse open terrain causing remarkable destruction to the habitats, their fauna and flora, spreading loads of dust and disturbing the tranquility of the sites.

Hunting was rampant in the area for decades; hunters came from local communities and from various parts of the mountains and the country. 2018 marked the organization of hunting seasons and prey in Lebanon; this will reduce pressures of hunting on the heights provided hunting laws are enforced.

This region is undergoing a lot of construction projects. The CEDRAR project site is still in its preparation stage. The Saint Joseph University has contacted CEDRAR and signed an agreement with the following main points:

As part of its corporate social strategy, Cedar is committed to:

- Protect the biodiversity on its property and restore the adjacent disturbed ecosystems
- Pay particular attention to the *Iris cedretii* present on the project site
- Increase the surface of the cedar forest of god and arz el rabb

The LGCG” Laboratoire de Conservation et Germinatuion des Graines” will help CEDRAR fulfill its commitment by assigning an inventory of the plants of the region and taking the necessary steps for the in situ and ex situ conservation of *Iris cedretii*.

C. Participatory implementation

FoN has a very successful and precedential experience of collaborating with herdsmen toward conservation in the Horsh Ehden Forest Nature Reserve. FoN resorted to redistribution of grazing grounds so as to maintain the protected area outside the grazing zone. The strategy was successfully implemented. FoN learnt that herdsmen should be addressed directly, enlightened, engaged, respected; they will then be receptive to finding alternatives to support the public good and an appreciated cause. FoN is capable of influencing a similar approach in the Makmel area.

FoN had collaborated with several stakeholders of Bcharri region on different issues and occasions. FoN participated in local events, conducted trainings at Chbat Hotel, advised conservation of the cedar grove with local groups, such as, Friends of the Cedars, collected seeds for reforestation and local nursery supervised by Dr. Youssef Tawk. FoN is also known to a number of local politicians. Thus, our engagement with the local community is established. However, limited contact has been engendered with local stakeholders at the time of project design in order not to create apprehension while the organizations cannot fully engage locally; we have learnt from previous conservation activities that consistent presence and participation with local community is fundamental to establish confidence in the proposal and to engender positive interaction. Generally in Lebanon, throwing ideas and disappearing is viewed as unfounded and lacks commitment, which reflects an atmosphere of distrust and reluctance to engage on the part of the community.

In implementation, FoN will adopt a "participatory approach" at engaging local community and stakeholders in conservation planning, since it provides better, faster and more sustainable results. Accordingly, the addressed stakeholders will include:

- Local authorities: The project will first target local authorities (municipalities, mayors,..) to inform them of the significance of their biodiversity and natural heritage, to engender their support, and to activate their sense of responsibility for their resources and communities. Local authorities are essential to be well informed and engaged from the beginning in order to pave connection with the local community and to follow on all the progress of the project, so we would collaborate on gradually enhancing their capacities to respond to the public views and complement with effectiveness in undertaken actions. Municipalities will be individually approached at this stage.
- Key influential stakeholders: such as local politicians, prominent figures, religious entities, and other will be addressed and engaged to facilitate collaboration with the community, impact social views, and modify behavioral trends, since these stakeholders have their own platforms to infuse information and

trends to their communities as alternatively to respond to community needs and feedback. They will be individually approached to endorse the project and take part in its activities and outcomes.

- Local communities: they will be engaged through several means including dissemination of information, sensitization, enlightened to the endangering threats, and acceptance of their role in biodiversity preservation and abating damage as individuals and collectively as communities. These approaches are important at generating community acceptance and confidence in our involvement, so the community would positively react to our mission. Different community segments will be targeted differently through the appropriate sensitization tools and several times if need be, until local community becomes conscious enough to advocate species conservation. Definitely all segments will be first contacted to set the platform for a first engagement.
 1. Schoolteachers and students will be addressed at schools through lectures.
 2. Local NGOs, CSOs, youth and general public will follow common lectures.
 3. Threat inducers: mainly shepherds, need to be befriended, individually engaged and rendered confident to the objectives of the project and conservation outcomes that will equally benefit them. Alternative use modules need to be envisaged in collaboration, and adopted to curb behaviors and threats. They may produce innovative means for the coexistence of their activities and biodiversity.

Participatory conservation plans and Innovative modules:

- Community-designed conservation and management plans will be established for the designated species and habitats. A workshop will be organized combining all active community members and institutions aiming to collect the feedback of the community on their perception of effective conservation techniques and applications, and efficient management plan, in addition to their personal and institutional commitments to conservation. The Ministries of Environment and Agriculture will be invited to provide their input and means of assistance.
- Participants will be divided into working groups and associated with facilitators from FON. Facilitators will drive the discussions to capture the ideas and the consensus of the communities. A carousel rotation will then be undertaken to ensure the revision of participants to all views and the amassing of their feedback. Community feedback will be drafted into conservation and management plan and distributed to the different parties.
- Potentials for creativity toward innovative modes of conservation of the selected species will be harnessed from the communities in a participatory bottoms-up approach. The engagement of the community members will breed modules favorable for their management capacities, and signing their commitment to conservation in ways and means that are applicable to their circumstances.
- With respect to legal and formal conservation frameworks, community-designed conservation and management plans, in addition to field assessments, will be formulated into the respective legal frameworks for recognition of the conservation of a site and a species.
 - ♣ A “Nature Site” status can be easily acquired with the assistance of the Ministry of Environment and has an implementation timeframe of 25 years; it will constitute a stepping-stone to move later to an enhanced form of conservation based on the particularities of each species.
 - ♣ Micro-reserve module is the most applicable for privately owned lands. Lebanon already has an experience in this regard.
 - ♣ WAQF protected land is also envisaged for the church lands comprising valuable habitats for the above species.
- Innovative modules of conservation inspired by the communities will require the establishment of new frameworks, such as, conservation contracts with the private sector.

D. Criteria for eligibility of affected persons

The project partners will only consider as affected persons the shepherds community whose livelihood depends on grazing on the Bcharri area.

In the Makmel region, hunting activities are not considered livelihood activities; hunting is purely recreational, undertaken by individuals from local communities, as well as, visitors from far regions. Here, hunting is a wandering activity of no reciprocity with a site or specific location; thus, there is no hunting acclaimed site that contradicts with conservation activity. Also, Lebanon decreed new hunting regulations in 2018 limiting the hunting season to specific periods and defined bird types. The project will surely comply with the directives of the Ministry of Environment in this regard. Should restriction on hunting apply, the hunting community will be consulted during the project, but the restriction would not be compensated.

Regarding tourism use, restrictions might apply to non-sustainable/destructive tourism methods: quads/4-wheel drive etc. Discussions will take place with local authorities that are responsible at controlling these activities; private sector from the tourism sector will also be engaged and consulted to identify alternative in more sustainable ecotourism activities. As restrictions would apply only to limited part of the area, livelihood of economic actors from tourism industry (quad-rental etc.) is not at stake.

E. Measures to assist the affected persons

The measures to assist affected persons will be identified through participatory approach during project implementation and included in the action plan.

F. Conflict resolution and complaint mechanism

During the first weeks of implementation, meetings will be organized to disclose the objectives and detailed activities of the project to the local communities. The contact information of FoN and USJ, as well as of the Middle East Program Officer from Regional Implementation Team (Sharif Jbour) and the CEPF Grant Director (Pierre Carret) will be provided. The grievance mechanism will be explained to stakeholders in the one-day workshop dedicated to build their capacity to recognize conservation measures and to engender their participation at tailoring best conservation approaches. From previous experience, opening grievance and complaint mechanisms prior to establishing a well commanded understanding of the project and its perpetual benefits would inspire the rise of unlearned complaints assuming forfeiting of social rights when they are not yet prepared to make a discerning decision. The timing of this issue is very delicate; mistakes would be detrimental for we could end up quelling fears rather than creating objectivity toward conservation. A list of all contacts will again be provided to local stakeholders. A poster will thereafter be placed in the municipality of Bcharri explaining the complaint mechanism and providing the contacts.

The conflict resolution follows a four steps approach:

- a- Any complaints would be addressed first by FoN and USJ. Upon reception of the complaint, the project lead would organize a meeting with a representative of the municipality and the person complaining, to find a solution.
- b- If no satisfactory solution is found, the complaint will be raised to RIT Programme Officer (Sharif Jbour) and Grant Director for mediation.
- c- If the claimant is not satisfied following the response, they may submit the grievance directly to the CEPF Executive Director at cepfexecutive@conservation.org or by surface mail.

- d- 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.”

Grievances raised by the grantees will be communicated to the Regional Implementation Team for CEPF (Birdlife International) and the CEPF Grant Director within 15 days, together with a proposed response.

G. Implementation Arrangements

Upon launching of implementation, FoN and USJ will organize on their respective sites a series of meetings with the various stakeholders defined above under participatory implementation section, they include: local authorities, officials, politicians, prominent figures, NGOs, social groups, etc. They will be informed of the objectives of the project and the designed activities with their timetables to enhance collaboration.

Field surveys will be carried out throughout the growth and flowering season of the selected species, recording population information and locations of distribution.

The community will receive botanical training indoors and in the field; this will be followed with capacity building on conservation measures and a participatory dialogue to design conservation plans with the community to protect the SREs.

All stakeholders concerned with conservation will be addressed directly to engage and take their opinion.

The compiled information from all consultations will translate into an action plan. The plan will incorporate lines of action that address the potentially affected people as identified through the consultations and participatory dialogue. A management plan will be formulated taking into consideration all accounts.

Beside, FoN will collaborate with the sub-grantee “Association for the Protection of Jabal Moussa” on regular basis. FoN will report on the implementation of the sub-grant every six months together with the performance report.