

Sustainable Silvopastoral Restoration to Promote Ecosystem Services in Tunisia - Minutes of the Inception Workshop -

Date: Friday 8 December 2017

Venue: Dar Zaghouan, Tunisia



Opening statements

Mr. Hamza (DG of CRDA of Zaghouan) who chaired the meeting, started his opening statement by welcoming all participants: He welcomed all participants mainly ICARDA scientists and the guests of Zaghouan and express the willingness of the CRDA to strengthen the collaboration with all stakeholders including the international (FAO and ICARDA) and national (DGF, ESA Mateur, INRGREF) and local (GDA) organizations. He emphasized the need for developing an action plan and to agree on an appropriate mechanism of coordination between all partners based on the priorities of the Sbahia community to be discussed during the meeting.

Dr. Mounir Louhaichi (ICARDA): presented ICARDA mandate as one of the 15 CGIAR Centers with comparative advantage as the only Center located in the WANA region aiming at improving the smallholder livelihoods through enhancing the agricultural production at the farm level while conserving natural resources. He thanked CRDA and DGF for their efforts in organizing this inception workshop and all participants. He also addressed his special thanks to FAO for funding this pilot operation which will be out scaled to other areas from MENA region once the targeted objectives are met.

Project objectives and components

Mr. Jamel Kailene, the Sous-Director of rangelands at the DGF has also started DGF opening statement by thanking ICARDA and FAO for their efforts to choose Tunisia and more specifically Zaghuan to implement this pilot operation and express the willingness of DGF to strongly collaborate and put its all its efforts to assure the success of this experience.

He presented the agenda of the workshop and also delivered a presentation on the project goal and the following components:

1. Livelihoods characterization and collecting baseline information
2. Implementation and maintenance of soil and water conservation practices (water harvesting techniques)
3. Reseeding using native species such as sulla (*Hedysarum coronarium*)
4. Selection and transplanting of appropriate shrub and tree species with high nutritive value and palatability
5. Rangeland inventorying and monitoring (spring 2018)
6. Capacity development (group training, on the job training, etc.)

Presentation of participants

The 36 participants showed up for the entire audience and showed their interest and their willingness to participate in the project.

Open Discussion

The main points raised and discussed by the participant are summarized below:

- The project components and local community priorities
- The December 2017 and 2018 work plan.
- Necessity of adopting the participative approach in all steps of the project implementation from the selection of the forage species to introduce to the development of sustainable management plan of the site resources
- Long discussion on *Hedysarum coronarium* ecological requirements and the willingness of the local community

- Long discussion on the non-planting of acacia and the wish of planting of fodder bushes for livestock and humans such as *Ceratonia siliqua* and *Olea europaea*
- Necessity to focus on the gender issue and enhancing its role in increasing the resilience of the community production system and developing adaptation measures to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change



Action points:

It was agreed by all the participants to take the following actions (workplan):

- Improve the forage production of the silvopastoral site, it will be necessary to introduce forage legume species such as *Hedysarum coronarium* (year 1). Next fall, grass species such as *Festuca sp.* or *Lolium sp.* could be considered.
- For this year (2017/18), approximately 70 ha will be sown at the pilot site using *Hedysarum coronarium*. The seed were recently acquired from the office of livestock and pasture (3 Tons). The site is protected by the forest guards as it is subjected to the Forest regime and a date has been fixed for this intervention: 13th December 2017.
- Organize an awareness meeting for the local community (GDA and its members) along with the project team (ICARDA, DGF, CRDA, and INRGREF). It has been agreed to combine this event with the initiation of the reseedling activity (13th December 2017). The event will be moderated by Mr. Jamel Kailene from DGF and Mr. Slim Slim (Higher education).
- At the request of the DG of the CRDA of Zaghouan, 1 ton of sulla will be distributed to private farmers surrounding the pilot site. The list of individual farmers should be communicated soon to the project team.
- Organize a field day (on the job training) on *Hedysarum coronarium* for the selected farmers on 20th of December 2017. This event will be moderated by Dr. Slim Slim from ESA Mateur.

- Characterize the biophysical and socioeconomic situation (baseline study) of the pilot site.
- Local community are also interested in multipurpose tree/shrub species such as *Ceratonia siliqua* and cactus pear (*Opuntia ficus-indica*). DGF will identify needs and locate nursery from which we can acquire seedlings. Transplantation can take place during the spring season. Meanwhile project team to identify appropriate locations favorable to their establishment and growth before spring season (March).

In the afternoon, the project team made a field visit to the target site. The visit was aimed to initiate implementation of the workplan (prepare soil for reseedling activity before rainy season)



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