

## MOROCCO



## MDGs

## Progress Towards Environmental Sustainability

Morocco has developed environmental policies founded on the concept of sustainable development as a key factor for economic and social wellbeing in the country. It strongly encourages the involvement and collective efforts of the international community in order to face environmental challenges at the global and national level. Population growth has no doubt had an impact on the use of natural resources and has exacerbated environmental degradation in several ways.

It is estimated that the cost of environmental degradation in Morocco amounts to 20 billion Dirhams, which is equivalent to 8% of the country's GDP. The increased availability of renewable sources of energy, however, has certainly provided a promising prospect for improved livelihoods, especially in the rural communities. Environmental degradation has also led to the pollution of coastal zones, mainly due to excessive and sporadic urbanization and poor management of industrial and household waste.

Improving the quality of air in order to reduce atmospheric pollution constitutes one of the main challenges facing Morocco. Air pollution is relatively limited in Morocco; it has, however, started to give rise to problems mainly in urban areas and particularly in Casablanca and Rabat. Laws and regulations have been drafted in order to control emission of pollutants, especially those caused by vehicles. While the implementation of this legislation has not yet come into place, it is envisioned to help prevent further environmental degradation caused by air pollution.

## QUICK FACTS

## CURRENT PORTFOLIO BUDGET

<b>Total UNDP-GEF and Co-Finance:</b>	\$54,645,400
<b>Total UNDP and Co-Finance:</b>	\$9,953,117
<b>Total:</b>	\$64,598,517

**Cumulative Total ODS Phased-Out:** 494.0 ODP tonnes

Improved environmental sustainability in Morocco requires international assistance, if MDG 7 is to be achieved. Donor and partner assistance and investment are vital in order to realize the goals outlined in Morocco's National Environmental Action Plan, which identifies several actions that need to be taken and provides an estimation of their costs.<sup>1</sup>

## SPOTLIGHT

Rural Energy Houses Create Sustainable Local Business and Rural Energy Services<sup>2</sup>

Many rural communities in Morocco lack access to the national grid system, which provides essential energy services for cooking, heating and education. Unemployment is another problem in rural Morocco, which is one of the reasons for the levels of poverty in these areas.

The Energy Houses project, initiated in 1997, was designed to provide energy services in rural areas that lack grid-based power. Each 'energy house' is a micro-enterprise established to provide rural populations - specifically the rural poor - with adapted local energy services, information, awareness and technical assistance. Each 'energy house' receives grant contributions from UNDP from a total contribution of US\$ 200,000 out of the total programme budget of US\$ 1.5 million. Supported by national ministries and agencies, local communities, renewable energy companies, and national banks, the programme provides young entrepreneurs with technical training and financial backing to develop the energy houses that market renewable energy products, such as photovoltaic systems, solar water heaters and improved stoves, install and maintain the equipment, charge batteries and distribute gas. The programme also builds awareness about the relationship between renewable energy and natural resource protection through demonstration activities promoting an integrated approach to sustainable development.

The initial phase of the programme led to the creation of 150 energy houses, which were fully operational by 2004. The programme has helped to create rural business and sustainable employment opportunities, as well as providing essential energy services to poor rural communities. Since its inception, two new partnership conventions have been signed with the National Agency for Social Development, and the Agency for the Development of Northern Provinces to increase the number of energy houses to 1000 units.

This project exemplifies the importance of partnerships involving national governments, local community organizations, private entrepreneurs and investors to meet rural development needs through increased energy services.

Poverty-stricken populations in Morocco are affected by environmental degradation more so than others because they are particularly sensitive to problems posed by water contamination, soil deterioration, air pollution and climate change. It is also among the poor in which clean and accessible energy is felt most strongly. UNDP is devoted to the strengthening of the national capacities and supporting strategic interventions to environmental degradation in Morocco. The various programmes undertaken in the field of energy and environment seek to achieve the initial goals set by the Country Cooperation Framework as well as measuring the intensity of integration of environmental affairs within national frameworks. The creation of favourable conditions and the reinforcement of the national capacities for implementation of the commitments entered into within the international Framework Conventions are vital to Morocco's successful, sustainable development.<sup>3</sup>



**Emmanuel Dierckx De Casterle, Resident Representative**

## PORTFOLIO

### FSSD\*

UNDP is currently implementing initiatives that centre around local and national capacity development. These efforts are driven by the needs reflected in various communities in both rural and urban cities such as Marrakech, Tesnift and Al Haouz. Local Agenda 21 as well as the NCSA process allow for a thorough assessment and analysis of the capacity needs and constraints facing Morocco's pursuit of sustainable social and economic development. GEF, UNDP and the Moroccan government are contributing to these capacity development programmes.

### ENERGY

The development and successful implementation of solar water heaters contributes to Morocco's efforts in reducing CO2 emissions. The key objective is to reduce barriers to entry through awareness-raising and cost reduction. GEF, UNDP and the Moroccan government fund these efforts. Other ongoing initiatives include integrating the Clean Development Mechanism and establishing a portfolio of projects that will utilise this method to help mitigate effects of climate change. UNEP provides support for these activities.

### LAND

The objective of the National Action Program to Combat Rural Poverty, Land Desertification and Drought is to implement a rural development strategy while integrating environmental protection. The actions envisaged within this framework make it possible to reinforce local capacities regarding rural development and establishing a participative, inter-sectoral approach to natural resource management. There is particular importance given to the adoption of financial planning as a key component to meeting specific targets within the framework. UNDP, IFAD, DDC, the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Water and Forests, and the Social Development Agency are all contributing to this objective.

### BIODIVERSITY

Domestic and regional efforts serve two distinct ecosystems through effective land management legislation. Biodiversity conservation in the Southern High Atlas combines common property management regimes, land use planning and innovative incentives for rangeland and wildlife protection to contribute to local and global benefits. Regional initiatives ensure the durable management of coastal and wetland biodiversity in Albania, Egypt, Lebanon, the Palestinian Territories, Morocco and Tunisia through land-use and wetland policies at a national level, site protection and management at the local level and regional networking.

### CHEMICALS

For more than nine years, UNDP's cooperation with Morocco has allowed the country to make significant progress in complying with Montreal Protocol targets through implementation of a comprehensive project package targeting the foams sector. UNDP is currently assisting with the phase-out of CFCs in the manufacture of flexible foam through technology transfer, technical assistance, trials and training. Building on this experience, initial assistance is being provided under the Stockholm Convention to Morocco through implementation of an enabling activity that will result in NIP development.

### CONTACTS

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### PARTNERS

**Some of our Partners working with UNDP and the Government in Morocco**

UNEP  
CDER  
UN Habitat  
AFD  
Government of Italy  
IFAD

<sup>1</sup>MDGR 2003 and [http://www.undg.org/documents/3545-Morocco\\_MDG\\_Report.pdf](http://www.undg.org/documents/3545-Morocco_MDG_Report.pdf); <sup>2</sup>UNDP, "UNDP and Energy for Sustainable Development", 2004; [http://www.undp.org/energy/docs/UNDP\\_energy\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.undp.org/energy/docs/UNDP_energy_brochure.pdf) and UNDP Project Document, "Rural Energy Houses Programme"; <sup>3</sup>[http://www.pnud.org.ma/Environnement\\_Energie/env.asp?m=7](http://www.pnud.org.ma/Environnement_Energie/env.asp?m=7); <sup>4</sup>Frameworks and Strategies for Sustainable Development