

# annual report

2012

The Royal Society for the  
Conservation of Nature

برية الأردن  
Wild Jordan



الجمعية الملكية  
لحماية الطبيعة  
RSCN



Helping Nature... Helping People تساعد الطبيعة... تساعد الناس

# Contacts

The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature

Tel: (+962 6) 5337 931/2

Fax: (+962 6) 5357 618

adminrscn@rscn.org.jo

Wild Jordan Center

Tel: (+962 6) 4633 589 / (+962 6) 4616 523

Fax: (+962 6) 4633 657

wildjordan.center@rscn.org.jo

Dana Biosphere Reserve

Reserve Manager: Amer Al-Rfou'

Tel: (+962 3) 2270 498/7

Fax: (+962 3) 2270 499

dhana@rscn.org.jo

Reservations and Tourism:

tourism.dana@rscn.org.jo

Mujib Biosphere Reserve

Reserve Manager: Hesham Dheisat

Tel: (+962 7) 9 7203 888 / (+962 3) 2313 059

Fax: (+962 7) 9 9987 448 / (+962 3) 2313 059

Email: mujib@rscn.org.jo

Reservations and Tourism:

mujib.res@rscn.org.jo

Dead Sea Panoramic Complex

Complex Manager: Alaa Mujahed

Tel: (+962 7) 9 6337 773

Email: panorama@rscn.org.jo /

alaa.m@rscn.org.jo

Reservations and Tourism:

panorama.res@rscn.org.jo /

alaa.m@rscn.org.jo

Yarmouk Nature Reserve

Reserve Coordinator: Ali Subaihat

Tel: (+962 2) 7505 354

Fax: (+962 2) 7505 368

Email: ali.subeihat@rscn.org.jo

Azraq Wetland Reserve

Reserve Manager: Hazem Al- Khreisha

Tel: (+962 5) 3835 225 / (+962 5) 3835 017

Fax: (+962 5) 3835 225 / (+962 5) 3835 017

Email: azraq@rscn.org.jo

Reservations and Tourism:

azraq.res@rscn.org.jo /

azraqtourism@rscn.org.jo

Shaumari Wildlife Reserve

Reserve Manager: Ashraf El Halah

Tel: (+962 7) 9 9957 939

Fax: (+962 5) 3835 017

Email: shumari@rscn.org.jo

Reservations and Tourism:

shumari.res@rscn.org.jo

Ajloun Forest Reserve

Reserve Manager: Nasser Abassy

Tel: (+962 7) 9 9062 210

Fax: (+962 2) 2647 567

Email: ajloun@rscn.org.jo

Reservations and Tourism:

ajlounreservation@rscn.org.jo

Dibeen Forest Reserve

Reserve Manager: Basheer Ayasreh

Tel: (+962 7) 9 9029 497

Email: dibeen@rscn.org.jo

Reservations and Tourism:

dibeen.res@rscn.org.jo

Fifa Nature Reserve

Reserve Coordinator: Ibraheem Mahasneh

Tel: (+962 3) 2300 067

Fax: (+962 3) 2300 068

Email: fifa.admin@rscn.org.jo

To all sections and reserves

P.O.Box 1215, Al-Jubaiha – Amman Zip

Code 11941 Jordan

Website: [www.rscn.org.jo](http://www.rscn.org.jo)

# Board of Directors

Mr. Khalid Al-Irani	President
Mr. Ghassan Asfour	Vice President
Mr. Issa Shahin	Secretary General
Mrs. Leila Sharaf	Member
Dr. Hisham Al-KHateeb	Member
Dr. Mohammed Sabarini	Member
Mrs. Zein Shubeilat	Member
Ms. Rana Nabir	Member
Ms. Rebecca Al-Salti	Member
Mr. Yaseen Al-Talhoni	Member

# Executive Team

Yehya Khaled	Director General
Mohammad Ali	Director of Administration and Finance Division
Mohammad Yousef	Director of Conservation Division
Nasr Tamimi	Acting Director of Wild Jordan Division
Chris Johnson	USAID Program Director/Transformation Director.
Maen Smadi	Head of Reserves Section
Rami Owaidat	Head of Human & Institutional Development Section
Sultan Hanafi	Head of Administration Section
Essmat Al-Shiyab	Head of Institutional Development Unit
Mervat Batarseh	Head of Environmental Education Section
Muna Al Taq	Head of PR
Omar Al-Shoshan	Head of Advocacy Unit
Maen Al-Qudah	Head of Finance Section
Laila Malallah	Head of Sales Section
Tarek Abulhawa	Integrated Ecosystems Management in the Jordan Rift Valley Project Manager
Ehab Eid	Acting Head of Research
Abed El Razzak Al Hmoud	Acting Head of Law Enforcement



# Note from the President

The Annual General Assembly Meeting of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) is being held at a time when our region is experiencing unstable social and political conditions that, unfortunately, have pushed natural resource protection to the bottom of the priority list. However, despite this difficult situation, RSCN continued to forge ahead with its portfolio of programs in biodiversity conservation and nature-based economic development. The achievements of this year are too numerous to be summarized in a few words, so I would like to pick out some of those that represent milestones in our conservation strategy.

RSCN, in cooperation with other environmental NGOs in Jordan, has succeeded in establishing the first ever environmental NGOs' union in Jordan. This will definitely help in unifying the efforts of these NGOs in their endeavors to protect Jordan's environment.

The Ajloun Nature Academy is under development as a regional hub for the training of practitioners in the fields of biodiversity conservation, eco-tourism and other aspects of sustainable development. Among the first programs it will offer will be a world class diploma in nature guiding, which will support the growing eco-tourism market in Jordan market and the demand for trained guides. To initiate this process, RSCN launched a national campaign early in the year to recruit four Jordanians to join a one-year, specialized training program in South Africa.

During 2012, RSCN also tried its best to increase the involvement of local communities in RSCN activities by inviting them to celebrate national and international environmental occasions and support voluntary work in protected areas.

On the intuitional level, RSCN's mission statement has been modified to become clearer and more focused on developing the management programs of protected areas and, for the first time in its history, RSCN has established a series of Special Conservation Areas where it works with local partners to recognize and protect the biodiversity significance of these areas.

Finally, it pleases me, on behalf of the Board of Directors, to extend our thanks to the executive team at RSCN for their passion and dedication to their work and also to thank all our members, donors and partners for their continuing support , which we greatly appreciate and depend on to fulfill our mission.

Khalid Irani



# The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature

The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature is an independent, nongovernmental organization devoted to the conservation of Jordan's natural heritage. RSCN was founded in 1966, with His Majesty the late King Hussein as Honorary President, and has been given the responsibility by the Government to care for and protect the Kingdom's biodiversity. As such, it is one of the few voluntary organizations in the Middle East to be granted such a public mandate. RSCN has gained a global fame for its pioneering work in integrating nature conservation programmes with socio-economic development.

## Mission Statement

The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature aims to create, manage and advocate for a national network of protected areas to conserve Jordan's biodiversity and support local community development, while promoting wider public support and action for the protection of the natural environment within Jordan and neighboring countries.

RSCN protects biodiversity by:

- Setting up and efficiently managing a national network of protected areas, representing the best examples of Jordan's ecosystems and habitats.
- Enforcing hunting laws, specifically in protected areas and other areas of special biodiversity value.
- Implementing development initiatives for local communities living around protected areas.
- Developing a national environmental education program targeting local students who live around protected with the intention to form a nucleus of future employees in protected areas.
- Providing training and capacity building for RSCN staff and other active national and regional organizations working in the field of nature conservation.
- Expanding membership, sponsorship and support programmes to widen the public and political support for RSCN.

## Helping Nature...Helping People

RSCN believes that nature conservation and economic development can go hand in hand. It also holds the belief that Jordan's nature can provide the basis of an alternative economy for members of poor rural communities that currently have few opportunities to improve their livelihoods. Within and around its protected areas, RSCN has been contributing to this alternative economy by developing eco-tourism and other nature-based businesses that are generating additional income and social benefits for some of the poorest people in Jordan. By providing tangible benefits, such businesses not only position nature conservation in the "real world" but also create alternative and more benign uses of land, and gradually build-up popular support for both the concept and practice of nature conservation.



# Definitions

**General Assembly** All active members of RSCN's membership program.

**Board of Directors** The governing body elected by the General Assembly to supervise the management of RSCN, consisting of nine elected members and two appointed members, making a total of eleven. The board is elected every four years and is exclusively reserved for Jordanian nationals.

An RSCN member acquires the right to vote at the general assembly two years after becoming a member under the condition that he/she is a Jordanian over the age of twenty. A member becomes eligible to run as a candidate for the board after being a member for at least four years.

**Executive Team** The RSCN employees given responsibility for implementing the decisions and policies of the Board of Directors and running the organization's operations day-to-day, based on internal policies and guidelines.



This report presents RSCN's achievements for the year 2012, with the hope that the coming year of 2013 will bring more achievements in our mission to protect Jordan's natural heritage.

Secretary General  
Issa Shahin



# Strategic Achievements

## of 2012

**Establishment of the first union for environmental NGOs in Jordan** RSCN, in cooperation with several environmental nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) has established the first union for environmental NGOs in Jordan. RSCN's representative has been selected as the spokesperson for the union. This achievement is considered to be a significant leap in institutionalising the environmental endeavours in the kingdom through better coordination and cooperation between different environmental organisations.

**Competition winners go to South Africa for one year** Using a specially created website, [www.beanatureguide.jo](http://www.beanatureguide.jo), over 700 young Jordanians expressed their interest in competing for a one-year training program in South Africa to become world-class nature guides. Out of this 700, RSCN had the challenging task of selecting just eight finalists for interviews and a gruelling month-long program of examinations and assessments in the field. These assessments included GPS and orienteering training in Ajloun, a week of house-keeping and restaurant duties in Feynan Eco-lodge and working alongside RSCN's researchers in Wadi Rum. Based on this intensive testing, the final four winners were announced on the 29th of April and left for South Africa one week later to start their training in Kruger National Park, under a program certified by the Field Guides Association of South Africa. Close contact was maintained with all the trainees and it was clear from their reports and photographs that they were having an "experience of a life-time". And all of them passed their end of year exams with flying colours. The whole of this recruitment and training initiative was funded by USAID and the E-TVET Fund (Jordanian Government) as part of their support for the development of the Ajloun Nature Academy. When the trainees arrive back in Jordan February 2013, they will be developing the curriculum for the Academy so that other aspiring Jordanian nature guides will get the chance to have the same standard of training.

**Transformation Strategy** Implementation of RSCN's long-term Transformation Strategy gathered momentum during 2012, under the guidance of senior management and the Board of Directors. One key outcome was the re-drafting of RSCN's Mission Statement to reflect the critical importance of protected areas in safeguarding the nation's biodiversity, as shown below:

**The new mission statement** " The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature aims to create, manage and advocate for a national network of protected areas to conserve Jordan's biodiversity and support local community development, while also promoting wider public support and action for the protection of the natural environment within Jordan and neighboring countries ".

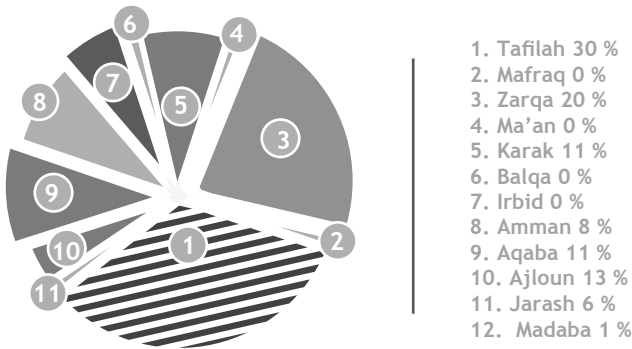




**Increasing the financial benefits of local communities from the protected areas programme** The total financial income for local communities living around protected areas has reached the sum of 1,575,652.35 Jordanian Dinars, distributed as follows:

Direct Benefits in Jordanian Dinar	Shaumari	Azraq	Ajloun	
	62543,00	180884,00	172171,27	
	Mujib	Dana	Dibbin	Total
	185460,46	930000,00	104908,08	1635966,80

These benefits reached eight different governorates: Tafilah, Zarqa, Ajloun, Karak, Aqaba, Amman and Madaba.





# Conservation Division

# Research and Survey Section

RSCN's Research and Survey Section carried out several ecological studies in 2012 to provide the scientific data on biodiversity required to underpin RSCN's conservation programs, of which the most significant were:

- Ecological surveys in the newly established protected areas, including Al-Khayyouf and Tal Al-Arbaeen Special Conservation Areas, Aqaba Bird Observatory and Swimeh Ecological Park.
- Two specialized studies related to Arabian Oryx: one to evaluate suitable Oryx habitat in Wadi Rum and the other to assess the impact of carnivores on the Oryx reintroduction programme.
- A study of the Phoenician Juniper in the Dana Biosphere Reserve to determine the causes of the widespread dieback of these trees. The study examined soil humidity rates, tree leaf humidity and sapling sizes, as well as updating information on the age structure of the Juniper populations.

# Law Enforcement Section

The Enforcement team continued to focus on patrolling important biodiversity areas in the kingdom in cooperation with the Royal Rangers.

Its main achievements were:

- Creating an elected committee representing hunters from the Governorate of Tafilah in order to facilitate communication and coordination with RSCN and support organized hunting and wildlife protection.
- Organizing an event to celebrate the international day of soaring birds through the Migratory Soaring Birds Project and BirdLife International.
- Implementing several capacity building programmes on bird watching and bird identification in addition to providing training programmes for staff of the Royal Rangers.

Summary of the Enforcement activities and violations	
Number of hunting licenses issued	2544
Number of patrols	1680
Number of violations	83
Confiscations at border and from patrols	4 crocodiles, 4 monkeys, 2 Hyena cubs, 6 apes, 2 squirrels, 2 Lion cubs, 571 turtles, 15 Goldfinches, 4 Eagles, 6 Chukars, 2 storks, 2 buzzards, 6 kestrels, two Lesser Kestrels, one Sand Partridge, one pelican and one vulture
Animal bodies and parts confiscated	Two tiger skins, two hyena skins, one fox skin and a head of a crocodile



# Protected Areas

Summary of the Enforcement patrols	
Protected Area	Number of Enforcement patrols
Dana Biosphere Reserve	2000
Mujib Biosphere Reserve	5400
Ajloun Forest Reserve	600
Dibbin Forest Reserve	1690
Azraq Wetland Reserve	3700
Shaumari Wildlife Reserve	859
Fifa Nature Reserve	1033
Yarmouk Woodland Reserve	1440

## Dana Biosphere Reserve

- A special study was undertaken on the Mountain Ibex using fixed camera technology, which revealed a remarkable increase in the population size. The study was implemented in cooperation with the University of Indiana.
- A rangeland rehabilitation project was conducted in the Al-Barrah area by the Barrah Dana Cooperative for livestock, with financial support from Small GEF and the RSCN.
- The bird species list of the reserve was updated, based on continuing surveys carried out in the reserve, and three new species were recorded: Short-eared Owl, Long-Eared-Owl and Tawny Owl.
- The “Dana +10” Conference was held in cooperation with the University of Oxford, focusing on the humanitarian side of nature conservation



## Mujib Biosphere Reserve

- More than 5400 patrols were carried out inside and around the protected area to control violations and monitor species.
- Visitor trails were inspected and maintained to secure the comfort and safety of tourists.
- Technical and consultancy support was provided for local community organizations to enable them to implement small-grant projects.
- Outreach initiatives were implemented to gain support for the reserve's conservation programmes from ministries and institutions in the governorates of Karak and Madaba.
- Several environmental awareness projects were carried out for students from schools adjacent to the protected area, in cooperation with the department of education and schools, including the development of an educational laboratory in the protected area, which was funded by the Embassy of the Czech Republic..

## Ajloun Forest Reserve

- The reserve's first management plan was evaluated and more than 80% of its objectives and outcomes were achieved. Work was started on preparing the second management plan.
- Funding was obtained from the Ministry of Planning and Ministry of Social Development to develop the tourism facilities in the reserve, including the construction of a new restaurant and 8 new chalets.
- Studies were completed on reptiles, bats and carnivores and reports published.
- A competition was run with the Nature Clubs from the villages around the Reserve to encourage students to find solutions to the problems of woodcutting and garbage dumping.
- More than 600 patrols were carried out inside and around the reserve to prevent violations of reserve regulations.

## Dibbin Forest Reserve

- Several initiatives were undertaken to involve local communities in finding solutions for the garbage problem in the Reserve, supported by funds from USAID.
- Eight forest fires covering a total area of 31 Dunums were successfully brought under control and more than 1600 patrols were undertaken, resulting in action against 58 violations.
- The regular forest inventory was updated and a study undertaken of the post-fire natural regeneration in the Reserve.
- Outreach programs continued to target different organizations active around the Reserve and visits were received from 18 school nature clubs.
- A study was carried out to evaluate visitors' opinion of the services provided by the Reserve and their knowledge and awareness of the Reserve's objectives. The results will be used in development programmes.



## Azraq Wetland Reserve

- Approval secured from the Ministry of Water and Irrigation to allocate a special well to provide the Reserve with water for the rehabilitation program.
- Two new species recorded for the wetland, Striated Heron and Pochard, highlighting the strategic importance of the wetland for birds, and especially migratory species.
- Promotional boards about the Wetland Reserve installed at the visitor centre in the desert castles in cooperation with the Department of Antiquities.
- Capacity development course organized for women from the local community on socio-economic initiatives, in cooperation with the IRADA centre in Azraq.

## Shaumari Wildlife Reserve

- New patrol plan introduced for the Reserve and its surroundings, complementary to the Azraq Wetland Reserve patrol plan.
- One-month voluntary programme organized for staff of the Arab Bank as part of the Safari Project. Working over several weekends, they laid the foundation of the safari track through the Reserve and planted 1000 tamarisk saplings.
- A set of documentaries about the Reserve's wildlife were produced by USA and French journalists, working in partnership with the Reserves' staff.
- 20 gazelles from Saudi Arabia introduced to the Reserve as a part of the wildlife exchange program between Jordan and its neighboring countries.

## Fifa Nature Reserve

- Several initiatives undertaken to improve the livelihoods of local communities in the villages of Fifa and Al-Mamoura and to assist cooperatives in obtaining funds from various agencies and donors.
- Support provided to the Forestry Department of the Ministry of Agriculture for developing a small nursery to grow threatened native plants like the Miswak Tree.
- Support provided for the local school garden campaign.



## Yarmouk Forest Reserve

- Reserve's enforcement and protection programme implemented to minimize the impacts of human activities on the Reserve's natural resources.
- Campaign to support local communities implemented, including the development of several socio-economic programmes.
- Several ecological studies conducted in cooperation with the Research and Survey Section to identify ecological indicators for the Reserve.
- Media campaign launched to promote RSCN's activities in the Yarmouk Reserve, including newspaper articles and TV reports about the reserve and its socio economic initiatives.
- Environmental education plan prepared for the Reserve, targeting surrounding schools.

## Aqaba Bird Observatory

- The Observatory is considered to be one of the most important sites for birds in the Jordan, although its habitat is manmade. It is one of the main hotspots where migratory water birds congregate during the migration season. The site has become increasingly important on national and international levels for bird enthusiasts.
- RSCN has signed an agreement with Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority to manage the site and started the preparation of the site management plan, including conserving the important bird habitats, and the construction of facilities and infrastructure for visitors.

## Dead Sea Panoramic Complex

- Alternative solar energy project opened with a capacity of 100 kilowatts per hour, funded by the Japanese Government. It will produce approximately 40% of the total consumption of the site of electric power.
- 16 street lighting units installed within the boundaries of the site, using solar panel technology.
- Museum Shop opened for the sale of souvenirs, which will help to increase visitor numbers and income for the site.
- Environmental education program implemented, targeting communities in the village of Ma'in and the area around the city of Madaba.





# Outreach Division



## Advocacy and Media

- A national awareness-raising program was implemented, funded by USAID, to increase interest in the conservation of forests and in revising the legislation governing their protection.
- Ongoing work with the media to ensure comprehensive media coverage of the activities of the organization and its objectives.

## Environmental Education

- Dedicated Facebook page created to provide an opportunity for students, teachers and parents to exchange information and experiences on local environmental issues, both national and global.
- A special blog was also created for students living around nature reserves, where they can write about their experiences and discoveries in RSCN nature reserves <http://edu4nature.org>. Both these initiatives are part of a project to develop the use of social media in environmental education, funded by the Board of International Research and Exchange (IREX) and the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI).

## Public Relations

The Public Relations Section continued to promote RSCN objectives and programs in various media in order to gain greater support. A summary of the most important achievements is given below:

Public Relations Section		
Awareness Campaigns	Lectures and seminars on environmental topics	Other activities and events
10	7	5

- Number of members increased by 3%, and the total number of 'Friends' reached 11,000.
- "Clean Up the World 2012" campaign launched in Dibbin Forest Reserve, funded by the Arab Bank and attended by many RSCN members, Friends, Arab Bank staff and school and university students.
- International day of Wetlands celebrated in the Azraq Wetland Reserve with support from the Arab Bank.
- Several awareness campaigns and events held to support global environmental initiatives, including Arbor Day, World Day for Migratory Birds, Clean Up Jordan and a special clean-up campaigns in the Scandinavian Forest and the area of Zay.
- Special 'Sponsorship Menu' prepared for potential donors, describing the projects RSCN has in the pipeline that need funding.





بيت الأردن  
Wild Jordan

السياحة في الأردن للزوار على  
البنفسج في عمان في عمان في عمان

36

# Wild Jordan

## Socio-economic programs

- Wild Jordan produced nearly 50,000 product items during 2012 for sale in RSCN outlets. These items were all produced by local artisans from RSCN's target communities.

## Marketing

- Promotional packages launched to encourage more visitors to RSCN tourist sites and generate more sales of socio-economic products.
- The role of social media strengthened as a major communication channel with the public.
- Archive created for all RSCN's publications, including electronic formats.

## Sales

- Several initiatives were implemented to increase sales of the socio-economic products, including opening new outlets in the gift and ceramics house at Tala Bay in Aqaba and in the Intercontinental and Hyatt Hotels in Amman. A new shop was also constructed at Rummana campsite in Dana, where it won the award of 'shop of the month' at Ananasah dot com for March 2012. Wild Jordan also secured an order from the Intercontinental Hotel to provide jams and thyme for their morning buffets.

## Eco-tourism

- RSCN staff from several different departments contributed to the promotion of eco-tourism in the protected areas. A total 45 bus trips were organized during the year, as Wild Jordan worked on expanding its ties and relations with private companies and non-profit organizations to include training workshops and field visits. These contributed positively to the total number of visitors to the different protected areas.

The following table shows the number of visitors to nature reserves and RSCN centers

Site	Number of visitors in 2012
Dana Guesthouse	5501
Dibbin Forest Reserve	90000
Feynan Eco-Lodge	4430
Ajloun Lodges	14500
Azraq Lodge	8456
Mujib Bio Sphere Reserve	35,000
Rummana Campsite at Dana Biosphere Reserve	7798
Dead Sea Panoramic Complex	37,000



## Wild Jordan Center

A promotional campaign resulted in a high percentage of bookings and sales for the Center, as shown in the following table:

Events held at the center and the restaurant	60 special events
Users and visitors to the centre	6000

## International cooperation and regional training

RSCN is considered a leading regional NGO in nature conservation and socio economic development; a position achieved after decades of hard work and accumulated experience. In 2012, RSCN hosted a number of delegations and organized several programs for international organizations interested in learning from this experience, as listed below:

- Visit of the Saudi Minister of Social Development along with a dedicated team and to see how RSCN implements its socio economic programs around protected areas.
- Received a delegation of the National Commission for Wildlife Conservation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in order to share experiences in the establishment of the Royal Rangers.
- Signed an agreement with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to build the capacity of 26 organizations working in the nature conservation and environmental sector in Jordan, Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, through a project funded by MAVA Foundation.
- Organized a series of workshops, seminars and international conferences on various topics related to environment and nature conservation.



## Memoranda of understanding and agreements

RSCN signed two significant memoranda of understanding in 2012:

- one with the Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein Foundation for the welfare of sick, injured and illegally imported wild animals and one with Jordan Wind Energy Production Company for mitigating the impact of wind energy schemes on birds and other kinds of biodiversity.

## International participation

While seeking to benefit from international expertise in the field of environmental protection and nature conservation and also to promote RSCN's programs, RSCN staff participated in several international conferences and meetings as follows:

- The International Union for Conservation of Nature Congress- South Korea.
- The jury for Environmental Ford Awards- the United Arab Emirates.
- Global Climate Change Summit - Qatar.
- Meetings of Birdlife International- United Kingdom.





Projects  
implemented  
by RSCN



## Restoring Dana Village Funded by USAID

By the end of 2012, the restoration of some 30 properties around the core of Dana Village was close to completion, representing significant progress in the gradual transformation of this Village into Jordan's first 'eco-village' for tourism. Apart from guest houses and 'studio' apartments, some of the restored properties will become shops, restaurants, cafes and museums, creating a mix of attractions for both tourists and local people. It should be said, however, that this restoration project has been one of the most challenging RSCN has ever undertaken and progress has been much slower and more difficult to achieve than anticipated. The village community is very complex and issues with stakeholders arise almost daily and require time-consuming tact and diplomacy to resolve. RSCN is also committed to using local contractors for the core construction work and they need daily guidance and capacity building to meet the exacting requirements of restoring old properties. And the renovation process itself is not like conventional 'new build' projects. Each property has its own design and requires careful and detailed attention to respect the original architecture and building materials. Nonetheless, the positive impacts of the restoration work are now clearly visible despite these challenges and many lessons have been learned. Changes in construction management were put in place towards the end of the year and the pace of work accelerated. Also, tourists used four of the renovated houses for the first time during October and gave very positive feedback. The project team is therefore optimistic that 2013 will be a good year for Dana Village.



Renovation of the visitor reception centre on the main street



## Creating tourism links between Dana and Petra

Funded by USAID

Apart from the restoration of Dana Village, the other tourism-centred component of the USAID Project aims to link the Dana Biosphere Reserve to Petra and create new eco-tourism activities that spread the benefits of tourism to the village communities along the connecting corridor, and especially those around Shaubak. Work began with the preparation of a Tourism Development Plan for the whole corridor, undertaken in partnership with RSCN's Rift Valley Project and commissioned through the University of Toronto. Post-graduate students from the University's School of Architecture worked with the two project teams throughout the spring and summer to research the plan and develop a strategy for eco-tourism along the corridor that accounted for different target groups, local community engagement, creation of infrastructure and facilities and financial support for the proposed new protected area in the Shaubak mountains (this protected area is still awaiting endorsement by the Government). Following completion of the draft plan, the USAID project recruited staff to pioneer the development of the two major trails the plan proposed, which link Dana, Feynan, Shaubak and Petra and offer different experiences for tourists, from strenuous three and four-day hikes to short, circular walking trails and bicycle routes. By the end of 2012, most of the trails had been mapped and plans prepared for en-route facilities and activities. The scenery along these mountain trails is spectacular and there is little doubt they will become one of the eco-tourism highlights of Jordan.

## Organic Farming project

Funded by the Invest Bank

RSCN continued to work with the Al-Kifah Cooperative Society to develop organic farming in Ajloun, with the short term goals of providing organic produce for the Ajloun Academy restaurant when it opens, the Wild Jordan Café and a farmers market in Amman. 25 farmers are part of the project and work completed in 2012 included an appraisal of institutional effectiveness, capacity building needs and the development of an MOU with the Cooperative.

## Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Jordan Rift Valley

Funded by the Global Environment facility GEF

- Established a land use program at RSCN, and the preparation of land use guidelines.
  - Established a nucleus of a local development unit in the protected areas program.
  - Supported the declaration of the Souf Special Conservation Area in cooperation with the Ma'wa Foundation.
  - Signed an agreement for the Aqaba Bird Observatory with Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority and for Hima Al-Layathenh with Petra authority.
  - Established management units in the Special Conservation Areas of Al-Khayyuf and Tel Al-Arba'een.
  - Developed an environmental park in Homret Ma'in Special Conservation Area and signed a new agreement with the partners at Ibn Hammad Special Conservation Area.
- Finalized the national report on strategies to cope with climate change.
- Provided funding for small projects for local communities around protected areas
  - worth \$100,000.





## Regional Nature Academy

Funded by USAID, E-TVET and Hanns Seidel Foundation

Gripping the edge of the old quarry cliff like a modern-day castle, RSCN's Nature Academy had become a noteworthy landmark in the Ajloun landscape by the end of 2012. Virtually all the main that 2013 will be a good year for Dana Village. structure had been completed and work was well underway on the finishing and electro-mechanical fittings. A major milestone was the completion of the stone and concrete bridge that spans the quarry pit and provides the main access to the building. This is the largest, single-span stone bridge in Jordan. The building structure also incorporates many green design features, including extra thick wall insulation made of straw. The straw is packed between the inner and outer walls and treated with lime to prevent insect damage. Also, none of the trees around the building site were removed and some have been incorporated within the building itself.

Work also continued on preparing the initial training and diploma courses the Academy will provide when it is opened. One of these is 'nature guiding', which is seen as vitally important for supporting the growing eco-tourism sector. A major social media competition was launched at the beginning of 2012 to find 4 young Jordanians to be trained in a leading guide school in South Africa for one year, ready to become world-class trainers in the Ajloun Academy (see the "beanatureguide" feature article).

Major support for the development of core curricula for the Academy was also provided by the Hanns Seidel Foundation, a long standing partner of RSCN in its regional training initiatives. The Foundation agreed to host an 11-country regional workshop in Amman during March 2012 to identify the two areas of training most in demand by environmental organisations throughout the Middle East and North Africa. Using a process of ranking, the two priority subject areas selected by the workshop participants were biodiversity conservation and nature-based socio-economic development. Consultants from the Alfred Toepfer Academy for Nature Conservation in Germany were then commissioned by the Foundation to work with the RSCN team to develop diploma level curricular for the Ajloun Nature Academy in the two priority subjects. These are scheduled to be completed by September 2013.



Architect Ammar Khammash discussing the construction with the site engineers





**Administration  
& Finance  
Division**

## Human Resources Management

- Report prepared on the level of job satisfaction for the year 2011.
- Annual report prepared on analysing staff turnover, shared with staff.
- Electronic filing system completed for staff documents and records and electronic fingerprint system adopted for staff attendance.

## Institutional development, financial and administrative

Institutional and financial management are considered an important tool to support all RSCN's function and operations. RSCN continue to develop its management and administrative systems to maintain RSCN's position as a leading conservation organization.

The table below summarise the RSCN's revenue for 2012 :

Protected Area	JD	%
Government Support	255,000	9 %
Socio-economic Projects	489,656	18 %
Eco-tourism programmes	916,141	33 %
Trust Fund	450,000	16 %
Publications	13,332	0,5 %
Funded Projects	112,427	4 %
Revenue Projects	259,626	9 %
Training and Consultancy	39,539	2 %
Wild Jordan Centre	211,340	8 %
Membership Subscription	8,207	0,5 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,755,268</b>	

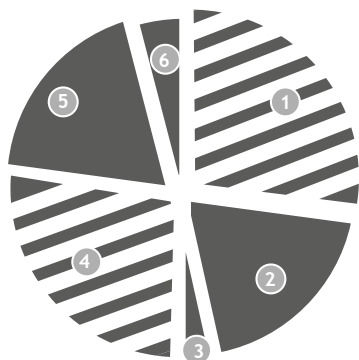


1. Government Support 9 %
2. Socio-economic Projects 18 %
3. Eco-tourism programmes 33 %
4. Trust Fund 16 %
5. Publications 0,5 %
6. Funded Projects 4 %
7. Revenue Projects 9 %
8. Training and Consultancy 2 %
9. Wild Jordan Centre 8 %
10. Membership Subscription 0,5 %



Surplus/Deficit	JD
Total Revenue	2,755,268
Total Expenditures	3,021,646
Deficit	266,378.00
Number of RSCN's Staff 2012	317

Protected Area	JD	%
Administration and Support	781,102	% 26
Conservation Activities	686,965	% 23
Outreach Activities	48,444	% 2
Socio-economic Projects	798,260	% 26
Eco-tourism programmes	610,294	% 20
Depreciation 2012	96,581	% 3
Total	3,021,646	



1. Administration and Support 26 %
2. Conservation Activities 23 %
3. Outreach Activities 2 %
4. Socio-economic Projects 26 %
5. Eco-tourism programmes 20 %
6. Depreciation 2012 3 %

## Definitions for the financial tables above

- Administration and management of sites: salaries, cars, and, contacts, buildings (rent, maintenance, development of facilities), stationery, tools and equipment, furniture, in-house training, etc..
- Protection programs: research studies, patrolling programs and field trips to regulate hunting, breeding programs and wildlife care.
- Outreach programs: environmental education, regional training programs, awareness programmes for local communities about nature reserves, exhibitions, publications, fundraising activities and public relations.
- Socio-economic development programmes: economic development projects for local communities around protected areas, including: pottery, dried fruits and herbs, silver handicrafts, ornaments, candles, etc. and eco-tourism programs.



A Special Thanks to all Members and our National and International Partners who have Supported the work of RSCN

**Jordanian Partners and Supporters** Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Social Development, Royal Court, Tourism Promotion Authority, Department of land and space, Meteorological Department, Jordan Valley Authority, Public Security Directorate, Armed Forces, Potash Company, Badia Police, Arab Bank, Investment Bank, HSBC, ARAMEX, Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development, Development Zones Commission, the governorates of Zarqa, Madaba, Karak, Tafila, Ajloun , Jerash, Irbid, Aqaba, Jordan TV, Roya TV, Jordanian Council for Green Buildings, Office of HRH Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, University of Science and Technology, Royal Rangers, the Judicial Council of Jordan, Jordan Customs.

**International Partners and Supporters** Global Environment Facility / World Bank, United Nations Development Programme, the European Union, Hans Seidel Foundation, United States Agency for International Development, the Czech Republic Embassy, the Swedish Embassy, BirdLife International, UNESCO, Ford Award, Fujairah Municipality, Ramsar Convention Secretariat, the United States Forests Agency, Canadian International Development Agency, Wetlands International, Hima Foundation / Qatar, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, the International Fund for Animal Welfare.

**Be a voice for the conservation of nature and join our membership program** to inquire, please send us an e-mail: [member@rscn.org.jo](mailto:member@rscn.org.jo)

Working hard to protect nature for us and for future generations. With your support, no matter how little that might be, you will be contributing to our mission: helping nature-helping people.

To donate, RSCN bank account: 26666/500- Arab Bank - Branch Jubaiha - Jordan, or send e-mail at: [support@rscn.org.jo](mailto:support@rscn.org.jo).

