

INTERNATIONAL ARID LANDS CONSORTIUM

Member Institutions

The University of Arizona
Desert Research Institute – Nevada
Higher Council for Science & Technology – Jordan
The University of Illinois
Jewish National Fund
Ministry of Agriculture & Land Reclamation – Egypt
New Mexico State University
South Dakota State University
Texas A&M University-Kingsville



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IALC Scientists from University of Illinois (Champaign) and Arizona Implement Training Programs in Jordan, Afghanistan and Pakistan

Tucson, AZ – July 29, 2004 – Scientists from member institutions of The International Arid Lands Consortium have launched the Sustainable Development of Drylands Project with training and development programs in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Jordan to benefit the people of those countries as the result of funds obtained by Cong. Jim Kolbe from the United States Agency for International Development.

IALC members include Jewish National Fund, Egypt, Jordan and six American universities, with expertise in arid or semi-arid resource issues and technologies, bringing together the apolitical scientific community of Middle East countries for the benefit of the region.

“Research by JNF on the uses of recycled water is useful not only to alleviating Israel's water crisis, but this knowledge can also be used to provide additional water supplies throughout the region. This is an integral part of the long-term plan for alleviating the water shortage,” said Dr. Foster. “JNF has also conducted research to determine which crops respond to different types of recycled and brackish water and this knowledge is being shared with developing countries, such as Afghanistan and Pakistan, through the scientists involved with the IALC.”

Afghanistan/Pakistan

Agricultural personnel in Afghanistan are being trained through an IALC program led by the University of Illinois. This training is focused on how to use the latest farming techniques and technology so that teachers and researchers in Afghanistan can restore Afghanistan's once-respected agriculture education system, stabilize food production efforts and increase self-sufficiency for the country. To date, 207 Afghan men and 22 Afghan women have been trained in month long courses in agricultural technology, women enterprises including poultry raising and management, preservation of fruits and vegetables, cultivation of mushrooms, water resource management and enterprise development.

A human resource development program at NWFP University in Pakistan and at Kabul University in Afghanistan in the Faculty of Agriculture has been proposed to focus on participants from numerous provinces with the long term objective of providing masters degree programs.

The program goal is to support sustainable development, management and restoration of arid and semi-arid lands to increase productivity and income. Under the leadership of Dr. Abdul Qayyum Khan, UIUC Director for Pakistan and Afghanistan, the Afghan program stresses long and short term training workshops, specialized individual and group research training and a long term master degree program. In addition, scientists from 12 research stations were twinned to strengthen linkages between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The immediate goal was to improve agriculture and livestock education and research, with a long term goal of sustainability.

“These programs enable Afghanistan to address some of the most important elements of recovering from decades of instability and war by re-building an agricultural sector and developing people who are trained and have access to the latest technology and knowledge for agricultural development”, said Earl D Kellogg, IALC Board member and Associate Provost for International Affairs at the University of Illinois.

Jordan

Focused on the water shortage and the limited potable water supply, the IALC Program in Jordan in its second year of implementation by the University of Arizona. Increasing wastewater treatment capacity in Jordan provides a growing supply of reclaimed water for irrigation. In the past two months, two workshops were given.

A 5-day workshop on *Sustainable Water Resources Management* at Hashemite University in Zarqa, Jordan, was held to provide local authorities with sufficient knowledge to make informed decisions on the policy aspects of drought, shared use and equitable allocations of water during drought emergencies. One aspect was to look at past climate conditions, which can be used to predict future probability of drought and wet periods. Upper level decision makers, managers and educators responsible for waste water resource management attended.

Since water is such a valuable resource in Jordan, a 3-day workshop on the *Recycling of Wastewater and Biosolids* at the National Center for Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer, NCARTT, was held in Baqá, Jordan. Attended by irrigation engineers and managers, educators, farmers and landscapers, the workshop focused on guidelines for biosolids treatment and land application for Jordanian arid and semi-arid conditions as well as to understand that recycling projects must take into consideration the risks of contaminants, current international practices, health effects and treatment removal.

The program also includes study tours for University of Arizona faculty and Jordanian researchers. Demonstration sites include a visitors center at Wadi Musa, a water friendly garden at Aqaba and a sustainable development demonstration site in Mafraq as well as projects and technical assistance.

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The International Arid Lands Consortium (IALC) is an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to exploring the problems and solutions unique to arid and semiarid regions. The IALC promotes cooperative research and practical application of new knowledge to develop sustainable ecological practices. The member institutions share a mission to enable people of arid lands to improve the quality of life for future generations. IALC member institutions include the University of Arizona, Desert Research Institute – Nevada, Higher Council for Science & Technology – Jordan, The University of Illinois, the Jewish National Fund, Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation – Egypt, New Mexico State University, South Dakota State University, and Texas A&M University-Kingsville.