Wadi El Rayan Protected Area

Information, Education & Communications Plan

(Versions: January 12, 2006, May 10, 2006, June 14, 2006)

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Introduction

Methods of information, education and communications (IEC) provide useful tools for the staff of protected areas to carry out their work. However, these tools can suffer from poor planning and fail to achieve their intended purpose. This plan aims to initiate good planning so that we know what we want to achieve, who the intended audiences are, what problems or opportunities we're trying to address, and how we can best reach the audiences.

The focus in this plan is on information, informal education (including some elements of interpretation[1]) and communications. A separate review on the role of WRPA in developing a more formal environmental education programme will be carried out. A separate marketing plan will also be prepared.

This plan is prepared to further specify the needs of WRPA in accordance with the 2006 annual work plan for the Egyptian Italian Environmental Cooperation Programme, phase II.

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[1] A specific Interpretive Plan is in preparation to focus on the delivery of the protected area themes, mainly oriented to visitors in the protected area. This is a key element of the eco-tourism infrastructure.

Collaboration is welcome on the design, production and execution of this plan. Accordingly, implementation will consider cooperation with the CISS-Fayoum Tourism Authority Project, the SCA-Medinet Project, the COSPE-Land Reclamation Project, Gran Sasso National Park, Italy (WRPA twin park), other protected areas, and the Fayoum Environmental Management Unit.

IEC Objectives

Four key objectives have been identified to guide IEC activities for WRPA:

1. *Visitor Information:* Provide information to visitors to help them explore the protected area, have an enjoyable visit, and learn about the special resources and area's tourism opportunities.
2. *Awareness:* Improve peoples awareness about the value and importance of protected areas and the harmful effects of mis-use of resources.
3. *Change Behaviours*: Enable people to change their behavior and practices to protect and conserve the protected area (people can become advocates for the protected area; they can explain concerns and issues, they can take appropriate actions and show acceptable behavior).
4. *Participation and Involvement:* Provide information to stakeholders and others to enable participation in planning and managing the protected area. This includes technical information for technical/scientific audiences.

Audiences

When planning IEC activities, it is necessary to know who the initiatives are being directed to. Once the audiences are known, one should consider if there any barriers that could limit the effectiveness of the IEC effort (e.g., behaviours, knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, geographic, cultural, linguistic, educational).

One should also consider if there are existing communications channels that are used and are effective in reaching the target group. In this plan, 13 groups of audiences have been identified, as follows:

a) Internal
- WRPA staff
- EEAA, NCS

b) Egyptian Visitors:
- PA visitors—up to 150,000 annualy (98% go to the Main Visitor Area mostly during feasts, public holidays; 2% go to other areas of PA)
- "Friends" (people known to be closely interested in WRPA)

Local Communities in WRPA
LR village (L. Rayan Lake) 4000 people 1936 houses 1540 families
LR village (Yusef Sadeek) 3500 people 640 houses 700 families
Fish Farmers, Oil Company Estimated __
Monastery 20-25 monks

c) Resident Foreigner Visitors:
- Embassies.
- Cultural centers (e.g , Italian, French, etc.) (some have websites).
- Expatriates.
- Foreign schools in Egypt.

d) International Visitors:
- First time visitors, traveling on their own
- People traveling via package tours
- Foreign non-visitors (observers of Egypt)

e) Local Residents:
- People living within the two land reclamation villages within WRPA.
- Monastery residents.
- People living in rural areas, villages and towns neighboring WRPA.

f) Commercial and Industrial Operators
- Fish farmers.
- Water pumping station.
- Petroleum company.
- Cafeteria operators.
- Safary camp operator.
- Ice factory.
- Water discharge pipeline.

g) Government
- Fayoum Governorate.
- Fayoum City.
- Local village and city councils.
- Legislative committees, national level.
- Police--security and tourist.

h) Media:
- Local and national.
- Newspapers, TV, radio, magazines.
- Travel guides, publications.

i) Organizations:
- NGO's supporting / collaborating.
- Area clubs/centres (agricultural, youth, women's, youth, etc.).

j) Ecotourism:
- Tour operators.
- Local managers of hotels, eco-lodges, businesses.
- Other hotels, businesses.

k) Collaborators/Partners:
- Gran Sasso National Park, Italy.
- Fayoum Ecotourism Project, N-S Consultants.
- Medinet Maadi (SCA) Project.
- Land Reclamation Project, COSPE.

l)   Donors & Corporate Sponsors:
- Italy via the EIECP-II.
- Corporations as potential sponsors of programmes.
- Shell Company.

m) Technical and Research:
- Michigan University.
- NGO's (UNESCO, IUCN, UNDP).

n) Education:
- Teachers.
- Students (local, Cairo, all levels)

Issues and Challenges

A number of key issues and challenges exist that currently limit the effectiveness of management of the protected area. IEC tools can be used to help address these. In some cases, special campaigns may be warranted to try to change peoples' poor behaviour, in favour of practices that are acceptable for the protected area. Key issues and challenges for WRPA include the following:

a) Mis-use and over-use of resources

- Dealing with illegal behaviors (e.g., falcon hunting).
- Industrial impacts (e.g., oil spills, exploration activities, track building, leaving unnatural looking sand piles, etc).
- Grazing of animals in the Rayan Lakes.
- Dumping debris and vehicle oil on the roadside.
- Limiting impacts (e.g., fisherman driving off tracks, use of pesticides and fertilizers, etc.).
- Promoting water conservation (e.g., drip irrigation vs flood farming in Land Reclamation areas).

b) Managing visitors and their impacts

- Recognizing and appealing to different audiences.
- Managing/limiting the impacts of visitors (garbage, off-road driving by 4x4 vehicles).
- Increasing awareness that this is a PA and its importance.

c) Supporting eco-tourism and related economic benefits to local communities

- Tourism and security police policy (escort system) limits the number of tourists to the area.
- Lack of signage, clear direction and information.
- Not enough foreign visitors come to beach area.
- Visitor Centre is under used.
- No information about the local communities to encourage visitors to visit and use local services (spend money).

d) Capacity, Scheduling, Coordination

- Implementing regulations (need to increase the number of rangers with policy reporting role).

- PA is open all the time (road passes through) and it is difficult to monitor and enforce regulations.
- Insufficient number of staff for the growing number and value of infrastructure.
- Confusion between authorities (coordination).

Methods

For each objective, a series of methods have been listed. The timing and responsibility for each is listed, where this is presently known. _Each ranger will need to identify which methods apply to their areas of work and schedule these._

When the methods are being implemented, some additional planning will be necessary (see appendix 1 check sheet).

Objective 1: Visitor Information
Provide information to visitors to help them explore the protected area, have an enjoyable visit, and learn about the special resources and area's tourism opportunities.

1.1 PA leaflet (has the painting of the waterfalls on the front panel)
Update the text and map (shows the old tracks). Intended to be a general flyer to attract peoples' interest to come to WRPA. Useful in tourist information centres, trade shows, etc. Add Medinet Madi. Translate to Arabic.
Timing: 2nd quarter. Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC

1.2 Map
Re-design and update the existing map in a bilingual format. Consider using a satellite image as the base map. On the reverse side, present a description of the natural and cultural features of the protected area and the rules. This map should be priced and sold (eventually revenues could be retained once a self financing mechanism is established).
Timing: 3rd quarter. Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC

1.3 Poster
Re-print the English and Arabic posters for distribution to local schools and offices. This was completed in partnership with COSPE-LR Project.
Timing: 1st quarter. Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC

1.4 PA Visitor Discovery Guide
Using A4 format present a multi-lingual newspaper-style brochure that features stories and photos about the natural and cultural features of WRPA, places to visit, things to do, rules, and a centre-fold map. This should also include information about some local tourist sites and local services (e.g., shops, fuel, accommodation, etc.). This is intended to stimulate and encourage local benefits. Printed in high volume on low-cost newsprint, a copy would be given to all visitors and distributed to local outlets for free distribution.
Timing: 2nd quarter initiated. Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC

1.5 Website
Websites can provide information related to all four objectives. Options for a WRPA website will be evaluated, including the need for a design and maintenance contract to ensure the site is active, current and accurate. A corporate sponsor can be sought to make this tool sustainable beyond the EIECP-II. Also, the EIECP project website and EEAA-NCS website should also be used and kept up to date.

Timing: 3rd quarter for evaluation. Aim for monthly submissions to EIECP website.
Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC

1.6 DVD
A short (10 minute) overview of Wadi El-Hitan Valley of the Whales World Heritage Site. A separate terms of reference has been prepared.
Timing: 2nd quarter. Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC

1.7 CD of Information
A wide variety of information, including maps and photographs will be presented on the CD and can be given to a variety of audiences such as tourism operators, teachers, visitors, special guests, etc.
Timing: 3rd quarter. Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC

1.8 WRPA Mascot
To engage young people, a WRPA mascot (in the form of a life-sized costume) could be developed and used in various interpretive and education programmes. For example, the mascot could be "bascillisourus" who visits the beach area to greet visitors and interpret the fossil story. COSPE-LR Project provide 4 mascot head-costumers (falcon, whale, gazelle,)
Timing: 4th quarter. Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC

1.9 Overview flyer of Whale Valley World Heritage Area
A short overview flyer, produced in several languages, to summarize the story of the whales and changing environments, and provide a simple site map to guide tourists.
Timing: 2nd quarter. Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC with Ranger, Hitan

1.10 Field Guide to the Fossils of Whale Valley
A detailed guide to Whale Valley WHS, including interpretation of the fossils and the past environments with photographs to aid in identification of the fossils and the site. Full colour production in English and Arabic. Priced for sale. Potential for corporate sponsor.
Timing: 2007. Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC with Ranger, Hitan

1.11 Whale Valley Ecotourism Itinerary Flyer
In partnership with the Fayoum Ecotourism project, this flyer provides a trip itinerary for potential visitors to Whale Valley.
Timing: 2nd quarter. Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC through ET Project

1.12 Birding in Wadi El Rayan Important Bird Area
As a designated 'important bird area', WRPA should provide general information to visitors on where and when to find birds, and why the area is important. This can be accomplished through educational panels in the Visitor Centre, at bird hides and through a printed brochure aimed at the general visitor and people with an interest in birding. For the specialist/expert birders, a detailed list of birds with status codes will be prepared and made available upon request. The CISS-FTA Project has plans for a birding guide—cooperation is possible.
Timing: 2nd and 3rd quarters. Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC and Biodiversity Monitoring

1.13 Medinet Madi Flyer
In partnership with the Medinet Maadi Project and the Fayoum Ecotourism project, this flyer would provide a trip itinerary for potential visitors to Medinet Maadi and WRPA. It would include a site map showing the two destinations.
 Timing: 4th quarter (after road is finished). Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC with ET Project and MM Project

1.14 Ranger-led Tours and Programmes
Rangers can lead interpretive tours of their areas to explain the natural and cultural history to visitors. These can be informal to small groups of visitors or more formal for organized groups and educational institutions, either on-site or in the Visitor Centre.
Timing: ongoing Responsibility: Rangers

1.15 Staff Training
Encourage staff to provide helpful information to visitors, and assistance with bridging language barriers.
Timing: 2nd quarter. Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC

1.16 Main Gate
The WRPA main gate will be re-designed by Gran Sasso National Park. There is potential to provide a small information centre, which may also provide information about local services (in cooperation with CISS-FTA). There will also be a map to introduce visitors to WRPA.
Timing: 2nd /3rd quarters. Responsibility: Technical Unit. IEC

Objective 2: Awareness
Improve peoples awareness about the value and importance of protected areas and the harmful effects of mis-use of resources.

2.1 Discussion Paper
Initially a discussion paper could be prepared to describe, in general and simple terms, the importance of protected area with a focus on WRPA resources. It should include consideration of economic value and benefits to local communities. From this paper, the key messages can be presented in the variety of other methods described in this plan (e.g., the newspaper for wide distribution and the fact sheets.
Timing: 2nd quarter. Responsibility: Technical Unit, Planning & Management Effectiveness

2.2 Interpretive Presentations
Through presentations in the Visitor Centre theatre, key messages can be developed and presented in interesting ways for different audiences. This can include local schools, visiting schools and groups, boat and cafeteria owners that need some training, and visiting public.
Timing: ongoing. Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC for coordination. All rangers to participate.

2.3 Media Releases
The print and electronic media (newspaper, TV, radio) could be used more effectively in support of all the objectives. For example, media briefs can be sent to newspapers to announce new programs or findings (a new fossil), the results of a monitoring or research programme. Where appropriate, they should be timed to coincide with the management need (e.g., at the start of falcon hunting to discourage people).
Timing: Ongoing. Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC for coordination. Rangers to participate.

> **Objective 3: Change Behaviours**
> *Enable people to change their behaviour and practices to protect and conserve the protected area.*

3.1 A series of short 'fact sheets'
A series of simple one or two page flyers (in Arabic) to describe the importance of WRPA, the key problem at hand (related to the target audience), the possible solutions to the problem. These would be distributed in different ways, for example by rangers during patrols. Topics should include:
- Fish farming practices, rules (e.g., use of pesticides, procedures, etc.).
- Organic farming (in partnership with COSPE-LR project).
- Composting methods.
- Falcon hunting (aimed at court judges to raise awareness about the need for stiffer punishment and the media to raise awareness about effective patrolling).
- Quarun Petroleum: A general overview of the value of WRPA and rules about reporting incidents, use of heavy equipment, leaving unsightly piles, etc.
- Grazing
- Etc. (need to think further about the needs of each audience).

Timing: To be schedules. Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC for coordination. All rangers to participate.

3.2 Patrolling and Monitoring
During patrols and monitoring, rangers often discover illegal or unacceptable practices. Follow-up discussion with the individuals is a good initial response. Subsequent follow up can improve compliance with the rules.
Timing: per patrol/monitoring schedule. Responsibility: Technical Unit for coordination. All rangers to participate.

Note: Where appropriate, more detailed campaigns should be designed to address particular problems (e.g., falcon hunting).

> **Objective 4: Participation and Involvement**
> *Provide information to stakeholders and others to enable participation in planning and managing the protected area.*

4.1 Newsletter
A four-page bilingual newsletter issued periodically to stakeholders, government departments, NGO's and other interested people to describe planning and management proposals and to invite comment.
Timing: First newsletter issued May 2006. Responsibility: Technical Unit, Planning

4.2 Collaborative Planning and Management Workshops
Periodic workshops enable stakeholders, government departments, NGO's and other interested people to discuss and comment on planning and management proposals. Consideration of these perspectives should improve local and national support for the policies and practices employed at WRPA.
Timing: First workshop in May 2006 for Hitan. Responsibility: Technical Unit, Planning

4.3 Management Plan
When reviewed, the plan will be printed in English and Arabic and distributed to key audiences (to be determined).
Timing: to be determined. Responsibility: Technical Unit, Planning

4.4 Management Effectiveness and State of Protected Area Reports
Monitoring management effectiveness is part of the work program at WRPA. Informal presentation of results to other staff should assist them in adapting their programs. In addition, more formal reports are required for various purposes, such as UNESCO on the State of Wadi El Hitan World Heritage Site. A newsletter could be devoted to summarizing the results of monitoring and reporting for wider audiences. Details can be lodged on the website.
Timing: World Heritage Report Jan 2006. Annual ME report in Dec 2006. Responsibility: Technical Unit, Planning

4.5 Technical Reports/Paper Series
Technical reports and papers can be made available to technical audiences through the website. Where appropriate, a summary version could be prepared and printed for wider distribution.
Timing: ongoing, front cover format to be developed. Responsibility: Technical Unit, IEC

4.6 Overview of WRPA EIECP-II Flyer
This summary of the WRPA Project, as part of EIECP will provide collaborators/partners with information about the project to encourage cooperation.
Timing: 2nd quarter. Responsibility: Co-manager

Evaluation

Implementation of this IEC plan is expected to improve visitor use and enjoyment of WRPA, improve public awareness about WRPA among local residents and others, address difficult management issues by adjusting behaviours, and increase the participation and involvement of people in the management of WRPA.

However, isolated IEC methods cannot be expected to achieve complex and long-standing problems. Usually, ongoing campaigns are needed. Accordingly, the methods in this plan should be evaluated to determine if they have been helpful in making a difference. Progress in implementing the plan and the effectiveness of the actions will be discussed prior to preparing the EIECP-II annual work plan for 2007.

Appendix 1: Implementation Check Sheet

Staff should use this check sheet to help ensure that related needs have been considered.

Title:

IEC Objectives: (check as appropriate)

☐ *Visitor Information:* Provide information to visitors to help them explore the protected area, have an enjoyable visit, or learn about the special resources and area's tourism opportunities.

☐ *Awareness:* Improve peoples awareness about the value and importance of protected areas and the harmful effects of mis-use of resources.

☐ *Change Behaviours*: Enable people to change their behavior and practices to protect and conserve the protected area.

☐ *Participation and Involvement:* Provide information to stakeholders and others to enable participation in planning and managing the protected area.

Audience(s):

a) List the intended audiences for this method(s):

b) Are there any barriers that could limit the effectiveness of your communications (e.g., behaviours, knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, geographic, cultural, language, educational) that should be taken into consideration? If yes, what are they:

c) What existing communications channels reach your target group? Can you use those mechanisms?

Key Messages: (list the main messages you want to get across)

Method(s):

a) List the method(s) are you using:

b) What are the key steps, timing, cost and who will take the lead role?

Key Steps	Timing	Cost	Lead Role

c) How will this be distributed?

Evaluation: (list ways that you will evaluate the effectiveness of the methods)

Appendix 2: Summary of Methods

Methods	PA leaflet	Map	Poster	PA Newspaper	Website	Video	CD of Information	Mascot/Costume	Flyer-Whale Valley	Field Guide-Whale Valley	Itinerary-Whale Valley	Birding panels and flyer	Itinerary-Medient Maadi	Ranger-led Tours	Staff Training	Main Gate	Discussion Paper	Interpretive Present's	Media Releases	Fact Sheets	Patrolling & Monitoring	Planning Newsletter	Planning Workshops	Management Plan	ME & State of Reports	Technical Report Series	EIECP-II Flyer
Objectives	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	1.10	1.11	1.12	1.13	1.14	1.15	1.15	2.1	2.2	2.3	3.1	3.2	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6
1. Visitor Information	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X											
2. Awareness				X	X	X	X									X	X	X	X								X
3. Change Behaviours					X												X	X	X	X	X						
4. Participation & Involvement					X																	X	X	X	X	X	X
Key Audiences																											
a) Internal															X												
b) Egyptian Visitors	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X											
c) Resident Foreign Visitors	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X											
d) International Visitors	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X											
e) Local Residents							X												X								
f) Commercial and Industrial Operators	X			X		X	X											X		X	X	X	X	X			
g) Government																	X		X			X	X	X	X	X	X
h) Media	X			X	X		X		X		X	X	X							X		X	X				
i) Organizations					X		X															X	X	X	X	X	X
j) Ecotourism	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X							X		X	X	X		X	X
k) Collaborators/Partners					X	X	X															X				X	X
l) Donors & Corporate Sponsors	X	X	X		X	X	X			X												X	X	X	X		X
m) Technical and Research		X			X					X												X	X	X	X	X	X
n) Educators		X	X	X	X	X	X	X						X				X									