Throughout the trail of Baqa Al-Sharqia, tourists will find examples of the rich natural, cultural, architectural and archeological themes manifest in this area. This trail also shows various historical and traditional human interactions in that area with their relation to the induced environment. A sample of the throne villages, which is one of the cultural phenomena found in Palestine and highly connected to the natural environment; the historic site of Tell Dotan, and the cultural landscape of Ya‘abad, represented by the traditional industry of coal production, are all sited within this trail. In addition to that, this trail sheds lights on Wadi Abu Nar –Hedera Stream (Khedera Stream), which is an important shared water source once used to be a source of life to its surroundings. Yet today, this stream is an environmental hazards for the people of the Baqa Al-Sharqia and its neighboring Baqa-Jat.

What to see!

Throughout travelling from one station to the other, the visitor will have the chance to spot various elements of wildlife represented in this area. Various endemic plants, animals and birds can be seen within different patches of that region. For birdwatchers, Zahrat Al Finjan dumping site would be a highly interesting site, since many bird species hunt in that area, including the Black kite. During the migration season, the area around this site is considered as an important roosting area for Storks and other raptors.

Touring tips

You can start this trail either from Baqa Al-Sharqia and ends up at Zahret al Finjan landfill, or the other way around. At Baqa al-Sharqieh, tourists may wish to stop by the environmental garden of Baqa—which was built by The Friends of the Earth Middle East- for refreshments or any seasonal or voluntary activity that they may wish to perform. A visit to the separation wall in Baqa would give the tourist a sense of what environmental, social and economical consequences and threats the wall had on both communities along the Green Line. Travelling through each station by bus or car, however, tourists may wish to take a small hike at each station and learn more about that area from local people. For birdwatchers, there are several sites that are included within this trail that shows a diversity of bird species. In addition to Zahret Al-Finjan, the tree land of Kufor Rai (south of Baqa), where this area is known to be one of the most important ecological areas in the North of Palestine.

Why Baqa Al-Sharqia?

Many archeological, architectural, cultural and environmental themes are being highlighted within Baqa Al-Sharqia trail. This by itself can give recognition to this area for ecotourism development. A very important aim of this trail is to draw more attention to the need to protect Wadi Abu Nar and the ecosystem that is accompanied. Many sections of this stream are extremely polluted; raw sewage, agricultural waste and building debris are all dumped into the stream from both sides of the Green Line.

Good water Neighbor Path

This trail is one of the 25 paths that deal with the issue of shared water, environmental resources and peace building between Palestinian, Jordanian and Israeli communities. The general goals of these trails are to:
- Raise public awareness of shared water and environment concerns to the communities.
- Promote cross border cooperation for solving environmental problems
- Develop potential for local ecotourism
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Baq’a Al-Sharqia

Baq’a Al-Sharqia is located approximately 16 Km to the north of the city of Tulkarem, directly on the Green Line. Originally, it was described as a very small hamlet on high ground, with olives. The name in Arabic means a bouquet of flowers resembling the beauty of the landscape in that area. On the western side of the Green Line lies its sister city, Baqa’ Al Gharbia, which is under Israeli jurisdiction. Both towns were originally one town, known as Baqa’a, until the repercussion of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. The town was considered to be a prime example for cross border trading and social relations until the Separation Barrier was erected.

Wadi Abu Nar

Wadi Abu Nar (and its main tributary, the Khedara Stream) is a seasonal stream that flows approximately 51 Km, making its way from the Nablus Mountains in the East, and down to the Mediterranean Sea in the west, passing through Baqa’ Al-Sharqia and other towns nearby. In recent years, the wadi has turned into an extreme environmental hazard, with sewage and solid waste being dumped into it from both sides of the Green Line, exacerbated by winter floods that usually wash through the wadi, bringing with them even more trash and causing agricultural damage on its way to the sea. Today, there is a project lead by UNDP to send Baqa’ Al-Sharqia sewage to Baqa-Jat wastewater treatment plant in an attempt to resolve the cross border pollution issue in the area.

Tell Dothan

Tell Dothan is located approximately 6 km south of Jenin and it is connected to the legend of Joseph and his brothers when they threw him into the well. At the foot of the southern edge of the site, the traditional houses of Dothan village are scattered around the spring, which is the only existing water source. The earliest occupation of the site was in the Chalcolithic period, where many potsherds of the late Chalcolithic were found. In the early Bronze Age the site was one of a series of large Canaanite cities. Excavation revealed that this site was fortified with a wall of undressed stone, 4m thick. There are visible remains of habitation on the summit of the mound. The location of the site as well as its network of fortification aided in ensuring the site’s prosperity, this is well attested by the large-scale burials where hundreds of skeletons and thousands of complete vessels were found.

During the Hellenistic period, the site was known as Dothan. A much-reduced settlement was constructed on the summit of the mound. In one area of the summit, a large Mamluk building has been partially excavated. At present a traditional Palestinian village is located on the western slope of the archaeological site.

Yad’ Bad

Called by that name due to the fact that prophet Abraham prayed there. Hence, it was a place a worship. Moreover, it was the passage of the Islamic armies over time and especially the Army of Al-Nasser Saladin due to its geographical location. Yad’ Bad is located 16 km to the west of Jenin. The town has a strategic location, overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. Its inhabitants depend for their livelihood on agriculture, mainly olives and tobacco. Yad’ Bad is known for its charcoal industry. Despite the fact that this industry has a negative impact on the environmental and human health, the landscape where these charcoal are made are considered to be a cultural landscape for what cultural values it has.

Arrabeh

Lies approximately 13 km to the southwest of Jenin. This village is characterized as one of the throne villages in Palestine. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the central highlands of Palestine (today the West Bank) were divided into twenty-four administrative domains (sheikdoms). These sheikdoms were ruled by sheiks who belonged to rich “noble” families, and it is where these sheiks and their families resided that is called “Throne Villages” or Qura Karasi. The sheikh, who was endowed with both political and social status, was the tax collector on behalf of the Ottoman government. As a result, sheiks gained tremendous power and wealth, which was reflected in their lifestyles and the architecture of their Throne Villages.