THE REHABILITATION OF THE LOWER JORDAN RIVER

AND

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BORDER REGION ALONG THE JORDAN RIVER

BETWEEN

ISRAEL AND JORDAN

An Israeli perspectives of a coordinated regional project

Proposed plan – Phase A (October 2014)
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AND

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BORDER REGION ALONG THE JORDAN RIVER BETWEEN ISRAEL AND JORDAN

An Israeli perspectives of a coordinated regional project

By

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Proposed plan – Phase A (October 2014)

Short version
About the presentation

- It is not a governmental Plan – it has not been completed nor approved yet
- It is aimed to expose the present planning state to the public in Israel and abroad, to government officials and to “bring in” our Jordanian neighbors
- Certain aspects in the plan are presented in general terms only because they are still under discussion

The aim of this presentation is to share with you some ideas and the spirit of the overall plan
2011

Jordan River Rehabilitation Administration

- South Jordan river authority
- Israel ministry of environmental protection
- Israel ministry for regional development
- Israel ministry of agriculture & rural development
- Israel ministry of interior
- Israel ministry of tourism
- Israel ministry of Defense
- Israel ministry of foreign affairs
- Israel water authority

- Kineret drainage & rivers authority
- JNF (Jewish National Fund)
- Springs Valley Regional Council
- The city of Bet She’an.
- Israel Nature and Parks Authority
- Representative of various Israeli green NGOs
- Israel lands administration
- Israel antiquities authority
- Regional Water provider - Afikey maim
- Public representatives

Governmental Authorities – 6
Government Ministries – 7
Local Authorities – 3
NGOs and Public reps. - 3
LJR watershed

Rehabilitation project boundaries of Phase A

Lower Jordan River Watershed—Area at gage is 9,350

Major watersheds

Naharayim gaging station
The project’s vision:

- to revive the Jordan River and its natural surroundings;

- to maintain continuity of the open countryside while pursuing mutual acknowledgment and productive co-existence of the riparian neighbors;

- to enhance the livelihood of the local residents;

- to build bridges and develop reciprocal cooperation that crosses borders;
Design and decision processes

Land use
Ecology
Landscape
Environment
Tourism
Archeology
Economics
Water
Data collection and integration

Landscape & Environment

Ecology

Open land continuity

Plant formations (habitats)

Ecological sensitivity

Water plans

Hydrology and Geology
Design and decision processes

- Survey and Analysis of Current Status
- Vision and goals
- Examination of alternatives
- Choosing a strategy
- Planning
- Approval of the plan

Detailed Planning and implementation

- Land use
- Ecology
- Landscape
- Environment
- Tourism
- Archeology
- Economics
- Water

Public Participation
Implementing the Peace Treaty and good neighborly relations

Within the Peace Treaty, Jordan and Israel agreed to cooperate on the following issues:

- Any project which relates to the course of the River
- Ecological rehabilitation of the Jordan River.
- Nature reserves and protected areas.
- Environmental planning and exchange of information of projects with potential impact on the their surroundings.

Israel: Rehabilitation Administration

Jordan: Jordan Valley Authority
Rehabilitation of the LJRW

Phase A

The River

The Region

Economic Development
Once wide and plentiful

The LJR once carried 1,300,000,000 MCM yearly

Yarmuch tributary during flood (A. Gasith 30.3.03)
Population increase in the respective drainage states

<table>
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What happened in the last 60 years?
The LJR paid a heavy toll

a dwindled river

<10% of the original flow
Compounded adverse effects of loss of water combined with organic pollution

Destruction of aquatic habitats

Reduction in species richness

Salinity levels along the River (NPA)

..... and salinization
The Vision for the River

- Flow of the LJR will be restored replenishing the river channel with sufficient, high quality water which will enable recovery of aquatic habitats and of biological integrity.

- Gradual replenishment of river flow will follow the long-term restoration and support of the water potential of Israel as well as by adequate actions taken by other users in the drainage basin.
The Water Plan

Allocating water

- Increase release from SOG
- Release captured springs

Upgrading water quality

- Remove sources of pollution
- Remove sources of salinity
- Recycle fishpond water

2013 ca. 9 MCM
Expected in the near future up to 40 MCM

WWT Bithynia
WWT Beit She’an

Albatros
Water Plan

Upgrading water quality

Remove sources of salinity

Salinity target <1000 PPM Cl⁻

Removal sources of salinity (Phase a)

Desalinate SOG salt springs (~9MCM/Y)

Brine + Salt Springs (Mix.)

Options for brackish wat. removal

Fish ponds

Reservoir

Jordan River

DEAD SEA
Rehabilitation of the LJＲ
Phase A
The Region
Rehabilitation Project

Nature Conservation

Agriculture

Cooperation

Resolving conflicts

Tourism

Development

Coexistence
Conclusions

What do we expect to achieve?

- **Reversing the process – repairing the damaged LJR ecosystem and adjacent landscape**

- **Promoting coexistence of Nature, Agriculture, Tourism and sustainable Economic development, supporting the livelihood of communities on both side of the River**

- **Strengthening peace and good neighborliness**
On a personal note......

- We now have an opportunity to join forces and work together for a common goal – Rehabilitation of the LJR
- The two REHAB projects are inherently non-comparable
- Are both operational tomorrow?
- Let us hold on to the issues of consensus and identify the issues of controversy
- Let us work together to bridge gaps between visions and reality; and gradually achieve our common goal

My experience proves that were political decisions are involved, you can succeed by helping politicians to cross the bridge and act, doing it a step at a time!
LJR after flood (A. Gasith 30.2.05)

Thanks for your attention