2010-2012 Plan of Action
Pursuant to the United States-Morocco Joint Statement on Environmental Cooperation

The Working Group on Environmental Cooperation ("Working Group"), established pursuant to the "United States - Morocco Joint Statement on Environmental Cooperation," has developed a Plan of Action through 2012 that establishes specific goals and objectives and areas for cooperation that reflect national priorities for each Government.

Background

The Governments of the United States and the Kingdom of Morocco signed a Joint Statement on Environmental Cooperation on June 28, 2004. In so doing, the Governments recognized the importance of protecting the environment while promoting sustainable development in concert with the expanded bilateral trade and investment ties associated with the 2004 U.S. - Morocco Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

In the Joint Statement, the Governments announced the establishment of the Working Group on Environmental Cooperation, the goals of which are to: (1) develop a Plan of Action that identifies priority projects for environmental cooperation and to update said Plan as appropriate, in light of changing circumstances; (2) review and assess cooperative environmental activities undertaken pursuant to said Plan and recommend ways to improve such cooperation; and (3) undertake such other activities, as may seem appropriate to the Governments.

Work Plan Goals

The Working Group recognizes that, through implementation of this Plan of Action, it is striving to help the Governments achieve the following long-term goals:

- Compliance with obligations of the Environment Chapter of the U.S.- Morocco Free Trade Agreement to: (1) ensure that the Parties' environmental laws provide for high levels of environmental protection, and strive to continue to improve those laws; and (2) not fail to effectively enforce such environmental laws;

- Protection and conservation of the environment, including natural resources, and promotion of sustainable development;

- Transparency and public participation in environmental decision-making; and

- A culture of environmental protection and compliance with environmental laws through, among other things, the promotion of economic opportunities, voluntary measures to enhance environmental performance, and job creation.

Priority Areas for Cooperation

The Working Group establishes the following priority areas for cooperation with corresponding objectives. These priority areas reflect the "Areas for Environmental Cooperation" listed in the Annex to the Joint Statement and incorporate, as appropriate, additional areas based on changing circumstances (see Joint Statement, paragraphs 6 and 7).

1. INSTITUTIONAL AND POLICY STRENGTHENING FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS, INCLUDING NATURAL RESOURCE-RELATED LAWS

Objectives: To exchange information and experiences on environmental (including natural resource-related), legal and regulatory regimes; enforcement and compliance policies; tools, practices; and approaches to environmental protection and natural resource management that contribute to strengthening the effectiveness, implementation, and enforcement of environmental and natural resource-related laws and regulations in Morocco.

2. BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND IMPROVED MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS AND OTHER ECOLOGICALLY IMPORTANT ECOSYSTEMS

Objectives: Work with national, regional, and local governments and civil society in Morocco: (a) To promote and encourage the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and all of its components and levels, including plants, animals, and habitats; (b) To improve management of protected areas and other ecologically important ecosystems through, among other things, market-based mechanisms; and (c) To conserve and safeguard other important natural resources.

3. IMPROVED PRIVATE SECTOR ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

Objectives: (a) To encourage existing enterprises in Morocco to develop and adopt sound environmental and natural resource management practices and technologies, and to demonstrate that such not only benefits the environment and natural resource conservation, but also serve to foster international competitiveness; and (b) To improve the awareness of small- and medium-sized businesses of opportunities to access global markets through improved environmental technologies, practices, and techniques.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION, TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN ENVIRONMENTAL DECISION-MAKING AND ENFORCEMENT

Objectives: (a) To share experiences on involving the public in decision-making regarding environmental matters; (b) To promote the development of opportunities for public participation in environmental protection efforts, and improve public access to information and access to justice on environmental issues; (c) To enhance openness and transparency in regulatory and program implementation; (d) To exchange knowledge and experiences regarding environmental education strategies and programs, with a principal focus on basic and community-level education; and (d) To work together to promote joint environmental interests in regional or multilateral fora.

Activities

More specific activities that the Governments will consider to undertake jointly within each priority area are listed in the following matrix. The Governments intend to set implementation priorities from within the activities listed in the matrix, and understand that it is unlikely that all of these activities can be undertaken. The Governments intend to periodically re-evaluate the priorities in the matrix to ensure that available resources are applied to projects of highest mutual interest. It should be emphasized that the implementation of activities is contingent upon the availability of funding and other resources from the Governments and other sources.

Plan of Action Activities

Priority Area	Sub-area (theme)	Activities / details	Participants
1. Institutional and policy strengthening for effective implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, including natural resource-related laws.	Building capacity for ensuring compliance with environmental laws and regulations	Environmental Enforcement and Compliance. Continue the development of a program to address the challenges of environmental enforcement and compliance. The goal is to improve all elements of an environmental enforcement and compliance system, building on the current U.S.-Moroccan program in the textile sector, including laws, regulations, standards, norms, environmental impact studies, permitting, and inspections, with a focus on enforcement capacity-building, organization, staff training and management. Support Moroccan participation in regional environmental enforcement networks in the Maghreb Area and the creation of a domestic enforcement network.	U.S.: EPA, MEPI Morocco: SEEE, MJ, ABH.
		Seaport Environmental Security Network. Facilitate the involvement of Morocco in the Seaport Environmental Security Network, which works to build capacity for environmental compliance and enforcement, raise awareness to the challenges facing ports, and facilitate collaboration among government officials on ways to detect and stop illegal and dangerous shipments of hazardous waste.	U.S.: EPA Morocco: SEEE, MAG and others.
		Possibility of training on environmental liability regimes in case of damage to the environment and on the methods of determining related compensation.	
		Environmental Liability Regimes. Provide training on environmental liability regimes in cases of damage caused to the environment, and on the methods for determining related compensation	U.S.: To be determined Morocco: SEEE, MI, ABH, MJ.
		Economic Instruments for the Environment. Organize training courses for policy makers of the Secretariat of State in charge of Water and Environment and others from concerned agencies, departments and ministries, to examine the methods and modalities of implementing certain economic instruments, particularly the environmental tax system in Morocco.	U.S.: To be determined Morocco: SEEE, MEF, ABH and others.

Priority Area	Sub-area (theme)	Activities / details	Participants
		Fertilizer and Pesticide Management and Control. Provide technical assistance to the agriculture sector for management and control of the use of fertilizers and pesticides, including the process of identifying acceptable products and certified vendors as well as training rural farmers in safe storage and application. Collaboration on appropriate legislative acts and/or public-private partnership with an industry organization to encourage the use of certified providers of the products.	U.S.: MCC Morocco: MAG.
		Emergency Preparedness. Provide basic training and relevant tools to educate, inform and prepare for both high-level and low-level industrial and natural risks.	U.S.: USDA (FS) Morocco: HCEF, SEEE, MIND, MI.
	Environmental information	Regional Observatories of the Environment and Sustainable Development (OREDD) and National Observatory Institute of the. Environment (ONEM). Exchange expertise on collecting, managing and analyzing data related to economic and social activity impacts on the environment to enable decision-making down to the local level. Assist in the development of environmental indicators and a system for tracking the indicators. Advise on management of an operational system that facilitates the elaboration of reports on the environment to permit decision-making at the national and international levels.	U.S.: Inter-agency steering group to be determined. Morocco: SEEE and other local institutions.
2. Biodiversity Conservation and Improved Management of Protected Areas, and Other Ecologically Important Ecosystems.	Forest and Protected Area Management	Protecting National Forests. Strengthen mechanisms to counter over-grazing and fuel-wood collection including assisting Morocco in expanding its innovative incentive schemes for encouraging collectivization of small scale rural grazing enterprises. Provide comprehensive training for forest extension agents in rangeland and forest grazing management to further bolster Morocco's efforts to improve grazing management through incentive-based community collectives.	U.S.: USDA (FS) Morocco: HCEF.
		Marine Protected Areas. Support the development of a network of enforceable marine protected areas in collaboration with local fishing communities.	U.S.: MCC Morocco: DP, SEEE.

Priority Area	Sub-area (theme)	Activities / details	Participants
		Sustainable Tourism Development. Support Morocco's efforts to develop sustainable tourism to conserve unique natural and cultural resources and promote enhanced livelihoods. Focus on Morocco's existing protected areas and other areas with significant biodiversity resources. Work with protected areas officials, local communities and civil society to create economic incentives. Conduct a study tour for Ministry of Tourism Sustainable Tourism staff, tour operators and local decision-makers to build capacity to develop and market sustainable tourism products such as sea turtle nesting, birding trails and desert/mountain oasis flora/ecosystems. Facilitate Moroccan participation in the Conservation Fellowship Program where qualified candidates are paired with conservation personnel at U.S. National Parks to study and gain hands-on field experience for a period of 6-8 weeks in protected area management fields.	U.S.: DOI (ITAP) and USDA (FS) Morocco: HCEF, DT, SEEE.
	Land use	Coastal Sustainability. Provide assistance using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to map risks, identify coastal hazards, and map coastal decline and urbanization. This includes implementing the Coastal Development Program (CDP) for an Atlantic coastal area, likely the coast between Agadir and Tarfaya. The CDP strategy in the coastal zone is based on the concept of integrated coastal zones management (ICZM), including adjacent watersheds management. The CDP would also address land-based sources of pollution by inclusion of a coastal non-point source pollution control component. Establish economic and financial instruments for the recovery of coasts under sustainable ecotourism development. Advisory support for studying and designing an ICZM program linked to marine protected areas in collaboration with relevant Moroccan agencies.	U.S.: DOS (ENRC), DOI (USGS) and DOC (NOAA) Morocco: SEEE, CRTS, HCEF.
	CITES / Species Conservation	CITES Implementation. Enhance CITES implementation capacity by assessing and making recommendations to strengthen the CITES implementation in Morocco via training and workshops for personnel with CITES-related responsibilities, including permitting officials, customs officers, protected area managers/staff, Management and Scientific Authorities staff, and law enforcement agents. This work is intended to build upon the regional CITES Scientific Authority workshop held in Rabat in October 2009.	U.S.: DOI (ITAP) and DOC (NOAA) Morocco: HCEF, SEEE.

Priority Area	Sub-area (theme)	Activities / details	Participants
		Red List of Moroccan Species. Provide technical expertise in drafting new regulations and legislation to create a national list of endangered species; identify species to include on the list; develop monitoring and rehabilitation plans for listed species; and develop criteria for de-listing species.	U.S.: DOI (ITAP) and DOC (NOAA) Morocco: HCEF, SEEE
	Water	Water Resources Management. Collaborate on one or more of the following water-related areas: river and dam operations, fisheries, agriculture/irrigation, aquatic invasive species, integrated management of watersheds, protection of water quality and pollution control, and the development of unconventional water. Also focus on water management, with respect to institutional reform and combating extreme conditions, such as flood and drought. Contribute to soil stabilization and water retention through the planting of more than ten million trees under the MCC Compact. Improve efficiency of irrigation water management. Provide training to agricultural associations and establish on-going monitoring of water and soil resources. Assess potential downstream effects of irrigation developments.	U.S.: DOI (Bureau of Reclamation), USTDA, EPA, and MCC Morocco: SEEE, MAG, DP, HCEF.
		Sustainable Water Use for Agricultural Growth. Support legal and regulatory reforms that target obstacles to achieving optimal water use for agricultural productivity. The USAID Morocco Economic Competitiveness program would focus on areas such as treated wastewater reuse, financing for efficient irrigation technologies, and the intersection of energy policy and agricultural water use.	U.S.: USAID Morocco: MAG, SEEE.
	Fisheries	Driftnets. Provide technical assistance for the Government of Morocco's plan to eliminate use of driftnets in order to reduce the by-catch of species of interest (e.g. turtles).	U.S.: DOC (NOAA) Morocco: DP.
		Resource Sustainability. Enhance the ability of the National Institute for Halieutic Research to monitor the effects of fishing on the fish stocks. Help to ensure respect and implementation of national legislation related to fisheries and the coastal zone. Provide technical training for small-scale fishers on the conservation of marine resources and management of marine protected areas, as well as improve techniques to maintain fish hygiene and quality to reduce losses. Contribute to Morocco's Blue Plan for sustainable development of the fishing sector.	U.S.: MCC Morocco: INRH, DP.

Priority Area	Sub-area (theme)	Activities / details	Participants
3. Improved Private Sector Environmental Performance.	Technical assistance	Cleaner Production. Support participation in an ongoing project to create a regional sustainable consumption and production roundtable with a particular emphasis on cleaner production, greener energy and efficiency use.	U.S.: DOS (MEPI), EPA, and USTDA Morocco: SEEE, CMPP, MIND.
		Construction and field works. Assist firms to integrate technical design with environmental social assessment. Improve sanitation and waste management at fish landing sites.	U.S.: MCC Morocco: DP.
		Small-scale fishing boats. Design, develop, test and evaluate boat ice chests and lighter fiberglass boats to preserve fish quality, lower fuel consumption, and reduce use of scarce wood resources.	U.S.: MCC Morocco: DP.
		Kilns. Provide technical assistance and financial support to potters transitioning from traditional, high-polluting, wood-burning kilns to modern, gas kilns.	U.S.: MCC Morocco: DARTIS, SEEE, MIND.
4. Environmental Education, Transparency and Public Participation in Environmental Decision-Making and Enforcement.	Sharing experiences in promoting public participation in environmental decision-making, laws, procedures, approaches and techniques	Public Participation Toolkit. Strengthen public participation in environmental decision-making through, among other mechanisms, utilizing a public participation tool-kit now being developed for the Middle East. Use the experiences under the MCC Compact in the areas of stakeholder identification, prioritization, and engagement to contribute to the toolkit.	U.S.: DOS (MEPI), EPA, and MCC Morocco: SEEE and others.
		Outreach and public campaigns. Conduct outreach on environmental themes tied to informing, educating and reaching out to youth and civil society. For example, activities may include strengthening the ability of local non-governmental organizations to conduct public awareness and education campaigns about endangered species conservation and the illegal species trade and collaborating to educate the public on the relationships among water security, healthy forests, and managed grazing.	U.S.: DOS (Embassy Rabat), DOI and USDA (FS) Morocco: SEEE, HCEF, local NGOs.

IV. BENCHMARKS, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION

As the Working Group continues to further define cooperative programs, projects and activities, it intends to encourage implementing partners under the Plan of Action to strive to identify performance indicators and benchmarks to measure the progress made in accomplishing or otherwise furthering the goals and objectives of such programs, projects and activities and to facilitate public reporting of such.

Through their participation in the Working Group, the Governments intend to obtain and consider input from relevant local, regional and international organizations regarding relevant environmental conditions and indicators and views on the utility of cooperation under the Plan of Action. The Governments also plan to encourage public participation in setting goals and implementing environmental collaboration, and to make information on activities carried out under the Plan of Action available to the public on a regular basis.

The Governments recognize that a variety of government agencies and civil society groups will be involved in implementing the programs and projects under this Plan of Action, and that the agency or group that leads implementation for a particular program or project will strive to be responsible for public participation, information disclosure, and performance tracking related to that program or project.

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
UNITED STATES Of AMERICA

Samuel L. Kaplan

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FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
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Monsieur Abdelkbir ZAHOUD
Secrétaire d'Etat chargé de l'Eau et de
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ANNEX 1: LIST OF AGENCIES / ACRONYMS

United States	Morocco

▪ Department of Agriculture (USDA)
  ○ U.S. Forest Service (FS)
▪ Department of Commerce (DOC)
  ○ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
▪ Department of Energy (DOE)
  ○ U.S. National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)
▪ Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
▪ Department of Interior (DOI)
  ○ US National Park Service (NPS)
  ○ US Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
  ○ US Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS)
  ○ US Geological Survey (USGS)
▪ Department of Justice (DOJ)
▪ Department of State (DOS)
▪ Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
▪ Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)
▪ US Trade Development Administration (USTDA)
▪ US Trade Representative (USTR)
▪ US Agency for International Development (USAID)
	▪ Secretary of State in charge of Water and Environment (SEEE)
	▪ High Commission for Water and Forests and Combating Desertification (HCEF)
	▪ Ministry of Agriculture (MAG)
	▪ Hydraulic Basin Agency (ABH)
	▪ Ministry of Industry (MIND)
	▪ Fish Department (DP)
	▪ Department of Tourism (DT)
	▪ Artisanal Department (DARTIS)
	▪ Spatial Remote sensing Royal Center (CRTS)
	▪ Moroccan Center for Clean Production (CMPP)
	▪ National Institute for Halieutic Researches (INRH).
	▪ Ministry of Justice (MJ).
	▪ Ministry of Interior (MI)
	▪ Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF)