

ICBA and partners share five years of water management success in Euphrates-Tigris river basin

Amman, Jordan, June 28, 2018 – Over 45 participants, representing various government, national and international organizations, came together in Jordan today to share key achievements of the five-year project titled *Collaborative Programme Euphrates and Tigris* (CPET).

During the closing meeting of the CPET, which was initiated in 2013, it was confirmed that the program has significantly improved dialogue and trust between riparian countries of the Euphrates and Tigris region on water management.

The program enabled the countries to make progressive steps towards improved water management through capacity building, information exchange, analysis and regional investment prioritization. The program has also increased information and knowledge, based on ground-truth data to provide evidence on water use, services and impacts in the Euphrates and Tigris region.

The CPET has been implemented by ICBA in cooperation with the Stockholm International Water Institute ([SIWI](#)), Euphrates and Tigris Country Partner representatives, and four Implementing Partner Institutions, including the American University of Beirut ([AUB](#)), the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas ([ICARDA](#)), Stockholm Environment Institute ([SEI](#)), and the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute ([SMHI](#)). The program was funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency ([Sida](#)).

Speaking at the CPET's closing meeting, H.E. Mr. Erik Ullenhag, Ambassador of Sweden to Jordan, emphasized the importance that Swedish foreign policy attaches to women's empowerment and the role of women in water management. H.E. Ullenhag also stressed the importance of regional cooperation for peace and stability, saying that "it's better for bureaucrats, technocrats, experts and diplomats to meet than for soldiers to meet".

For her part, Dr. Ismahane Elouafi, Director General of ICBA, said, "On behalf of ICBA, our implementing partners, and our national partners, I would like to extend our deepest thanks and appreciation to Sida. Without the vision of Sida regarding the importance of this initiative and hence the provision of the needed financial support to enable its execution, we would not be celebrating our success today. We now need to focus on the future, identifying appropriate solutions and defining implementable investment programs built on the solid knowledge we have acquired."

Senior Programme Manager at the Regional Water, Environment, Climate Change, Renewable Energy and Food Security Unit for MENA at Sida, Ms. Esse Nilsson, said, "Sida finds it very important to build upon the regional and national experiences and partnerships that are created in programs addressing water, natural resources, environment and climate change, of the kind that the CPET program has been developing and where regional and national priorities are reflected in the generation of knowledge. In this way, the CPET has fostered opportunities to share regional data, information and knowledge with the purpose to build relationships and trust, not the least, among the stakeholders."

The riparian countries are interdependent, sharing water drawn from the Euphrates–Tigris river system to maintain ecosystem goods and services, agriculture and energy production, municipal and industrial water supply, livelihoods and cultural resources. However, it is a system that is very vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change and that suffers from salinity, land degradation, deteriorating marshlands and ecosystems – affecting to varying degrees the countries that share the [Euphrates–Tigris River Basin](#), including Iraq, Turkey, Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Jordan. In view of this, it is important to promote effective regional collaboration through initiatives such as the CPET in order to address the current and future challenges of this transboundary river system and others facing similar challenges.

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About ICBA

The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) is an international, non-profit research-for-development organization that aims to strengthen agricultural productivity in marginal and saline environments through identifying, testing and facilitating access to sustainable solutions for food, nutrition and income security.

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