Qeshm and Adjacent Islands
Bio-cultural Protocol

We are coastal communities of Qeshm, Hengam, Larak, and Hormuz Islands. We have been conserving our natural resources through traditional knowledge and customary management systems for hundreds of years.

This document is our bio-cultural protocol which introduces our identity, lifestyle, natural environment, and our specific traditional knowledge and methods for natural resources management.

This bio-cultural protocol contains the following titles:

1) Where we are
2) Who we are (type of settlement, social structure, livelihood, ceremonies, traditions, and believes, traditional custom, language, traditional foods)
3) our ecosystems and their biodiversity (marine & coastal, andterrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity)
4) Where and how our cultural/ natural assets are recognized? (Qeshm Geopark, protected areas, biosphere reserves, Ramsar sites, and Important Bird Areas (IBAs), Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs), intangible cultural heritages, Hormuz Island soil carpet)
5) Natural resources management systems (traditional fishing methods, water resources management)
6) Successful case studies in conservation and livelihoods
7) Our legal identity
8) Our national and international rights
9) Threats and challenges

1. Where we are

Qeshm Island with an area of 1491 km^2 is the largest island in the Persian Gulf. It is situated in the Strait of Hormuz, where Persian Gulf and Gulf Oman connect. The nearest mainland port to Qeshm Island is Bandar Abbas with 20km (10.8 nautical mile) distance. The closest point of the island to the mainland is Laft port which is located 1800km far from Pohl port in the mainland.

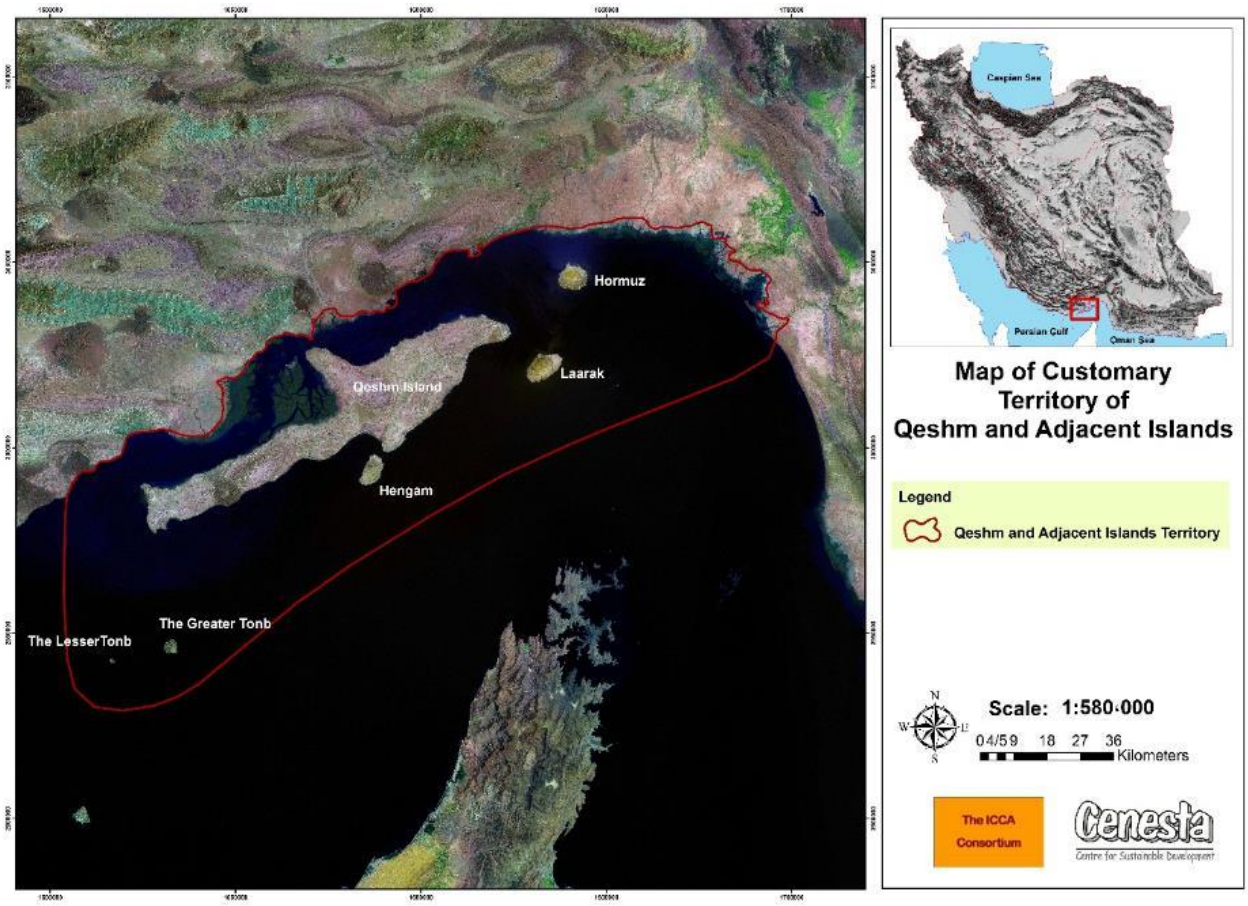
Political divisions as well as ecological and cultural features, integrates Qeshm Island with three nearby islands: Hormuz, Hengam, and Larak.

Hengam Island is 33.6 sq. km in area and is located facing the southern coasts of Qeshm Island. It is about 92 nautical miles from Qeshm city. The island is made of lime hills. Its biggest diameter from Old Hengam village to New Hengam village is 9 km.

Larak Island has an area of 84.7 sq. km and is located 81 nautical miles from Bandar Abbas and 6 nautical miles from Qeshm city. It is located to the northeast of the city. Larak Island is made up of conical volcanic mountains. It has a number of salt springs and very beautiful beaches.

Hormuz Island has an area of 14.9 sq. km and is located 10 nautical miles southeast of Bandar Abbas. It is made of sedimentary and igneous stones while salt layers have covered big parts of the island in the form of hills. Its highest point is 186 m above the sea level and the biggest diameter of the island is 8 km.

According to Islamic Republic of Iran political division, Qeshm, Hengam, Larak, and Hormuz Islands are placed in Hormozgan Province, Qeshm County.



2. Who we are

2.1. Type of Settlement

We live a rural lifestyle. There are 60 villages and 3 cities in Qeshm Island and most of the villages are spread in the west half of the island. Hengam Island contains three villages: Mashi (New Hengam), Old Hengam , and Ghil. The only residential part of Hormuz Island is Hormuz city. Larak-e Shahri is the only village in Larak Island.

In the past, Qeshm local people used to migrate to their summering places inside the island or ports in the mainland (such as Minab city) in summer to manage their palm orchards or work in others' palm orchards.

Figure 1. Traditional architecture in Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 2. Summering house, Qeshm Island (Photo from www.qeshmonline.com)

2.2. Social structure

Based on the 1390 (2011) census, total population of Qeshm County is 117774 from which 47848 is urban population and 69926 is rural population. Total population is about 7.5% of total provincial population. Moreover, land area is 1626 Km2 which is 2.2% of total provincial land area.

Our local conflicts are mostly resolved by elders and Imams of each village.

2.3. Livelihood

Our main sources of livelihood are fishing, livestock husbandry, trade and maritime transport, palm planting, and handicrafts.

Farming, palm planting, mat weaving used to be more common in the past due to more precipitation.

Native wheat and barley breeds and vegetables used to be planted in Qeshm farms. Livestock husbandry used to be on camel, goat, cow, and donkey and at the present, goat, camel, and cow are our main livestock.

Our goats are from “Taali” breed and is locally called “Jazirati” goat which is a dairy breed and has elongated body, moderate and fallen ears, fine feet, shiny and very short hair, and mostly no horn.
Our camels are from “Jammaz” breed which are thin and very fast and one of the best camel breeds for camel racing.

Figure 3. Goat herding, Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 4. Woman camel herder, Qeshm Island (Photo: Mobina Nourmohammadian)

Figure 5. Qeshmi camel herder (Photo: (Photo: Mobina Nourmohammadian)

Figure 6. Qeshmi man milking camel (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 7. Palm Orchard, Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 8. Palm Orchard, Soheili village (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Fishery is our basic source of livelihood. We use many traditional fishing methods based on the season, location and type of the fish or shrimp. The four types of fishstock

that are usually available in our markets are various types of shrimps, shark, cuttlefish, crab, tuna, sardines, grunts, trevallies and pomfret.
Gargoor, Moshta, Paroo, Momfi net, Havoori net are some examples of traditional fishing gears.

Figure 9. Moshta keeping by local women, Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 10. Tookh; traditional fishing camp in Mangrove forests (Photo: Sepideh Shakeri Nasr)

Figure 11. Fishing in Hormuz Island using traditional gears made by palm leaves (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 12. Fisher woman, Hengam Island (Photo: Sepideh Shakeri Nasr)

Pearl fishing used to be one of our livelihood sources especially in Hormuz Island.

Figure 13. Traditional pearl fishing, Hormuz Island (photo: Kazem Bayram)

Figure 14. Traditional pearl fishing, Hormuz Island (photo: Kazem Bayram)

Figure 15. Traditional pearl fishing, Hormuz Island (photo: Kazem Bayram)

Skills of making handicrafts is a traditional knowledge and passes through generations of local communities from parents to children or from teachers to learners. The main handicrafts made by Qeshmi women are different kinds of traditional needlework (Soozan-doozi, Gholab-doozi, Golabatoun-doozi, Badeleh-doozi, and Khous-doozi).

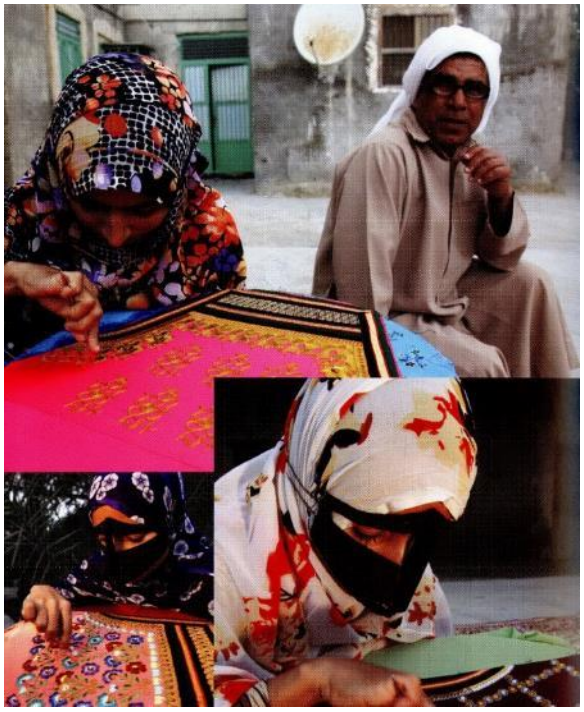


Figure 16. Qeshmi women making handicrafts (Photo: Abldulkhaliq Taheri)

Mat weaving is also another handicraft made by Qeshm local people.

Figure 17 Local youth weaving mat, Naghasheh (Moghasha) village, Qeshm Isand (Photo: Mania Khangah)

Since the main career of Qeshmi men has been fishing and maritime trading, we have been very skillful in boat building. These traditional boats are named *Lenj*.

Figure 18 Lenj boat building, Gooran village, Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 19 Lenj boat building, Gooran village, Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Tourism is our complementary source of income. Qeshm and adjacent Islands reputation is due not only to its historical background and places but also to its broad ecotourism attractions such as mangrove forest, turtle's hatchery sites, and coral reefs, diversity of coasts, marine mammals, and geographical phenomena. Thousands of tourists travel to the area every year in order to visit natural and geographical attractions, historical places, beaches and malls and shopping centers. We give some services to the tourists in this regard such as selling handicrafts, serving local foods, Henna painting, etc.

Figure 20 Dolphin watching as tourists attraction, Hengam Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 21 Camel riding as tourists attraction, Hengam Island (Photo: Mobina Nourmohammadian)

Figure 22 Serving local food for tourists, Soheili village, Qeshm Island (Photo: Sepideh Shakeri Nasr)

Figure 23 Local women selling handicrafts made by shell to tourists, Hengam Island (Photo: Fahimeh Seify)

Figure 24 Local woman baking bread for tourists, Hengam Island (Photo: Fatemeh Zolfaghari)

Figure 25 Local woman Hanna painting for tourists (Photo: Koosha Dab)

2.4. Ceremonies, traditions, and believes

Norooze- Sayyad

In late July, we (especially in Salakh village, south of the island) celebrate the Fisherman's Norooz (Norooz-e Sayyad) which is the start of the new fishing year. We stop fishery and do not eat seafood in this day and believe fish resources need a break for reproduction. Swimming in the sea to be fresh and healthy until the next new fishery year, wearing new clothes and preparing many kinds of traditional foods, all are customs for this day. There are traditional drums and dance as well as traditional games.

Figure 26 Norooz-e Sayyad ceremony, Salakh village, Qeshm Island

Wedding ceremony

Wedding ceremonies are being held for several days in bride's and groom's parents' home separately. Some of these ceremonies are: Hana-bandan, saakht (opening and showing off the presents given to the bride and groom), Moloodi-khani, camel racing, hejle. All of the village people are invited in the wedding ceremonies.

Figure 27 Local women singing traditional songs while walking to the wedding ceremony, Tabl village, Qeshm Island (Photo: Mobina Nourmohamadian)

Figure 28 Traditional dancing and singing in a wedding ceremony, Tabl village, Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 29 Camel racing in a wedding ceremony, Gavarzin village, Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 30 Figure 31 Moloodi-Khani; one of the traditional wedding ceremonies in groom's parents' house, Tabl village, Qeshm Island (photo: Koosha Dab)

Zaar ceremony

Zār or Zaar is a religious custom apparently originating in central Ethiopia during the 18th century and later spreading throughout East and North Africa, Egypt, Sudan, Somalia, and south Iran- including Qeshm Island and adjacent islands. Zaar custom involves the possession of an individual (usually female) by a spirit. Most of the Zaar ceremonies of the Qeshm island are held in Salakh village. Zaar ceremonies have their special music. Some of the main musical instruments of the ceremony are Dohol, Dayereh, and Daf. There is a special song for each type of Zar that its language is the blend of African Swahili languages, Arabic and Hindi that sometimes seems incomprehensible even for the old magic therapists.

Figure 32 Zaar ceremony (photo: Ahmad Bazmandegan)

Religious believes

As well as most island dwellers and people of coastal areas in South of Iran, we are Sunni Muslims of Shafei order.

Sacred trees

We have some sacred tree species. One of those is fig tree (locally called Loor or Lool). We respect this large trees because of their shade which is very important in hot weather. They have a deep connection to the indigenous life and culture, therefore some of them have a name which come from their nearby village or region. Some of them are like a “Wish tree” and we believe our wishes will be met by the tree.

Tela wells

Tela (Tel+a means mass/stack of water) wells and some trees around them in Laft historical port are sacred for us, said they were 366 wells and each one had a specific name and everyday people just used one of them. Today there are about 100 of them left.

Figure 33. Tela wells and water storage in Laft village (photo: Koosha Dab)

2.5. Traditional custom

Cloths and traditional customs are part of every local community's culture. Our traditional clothes, especially the women's are very special and look like a mixture of Indian, Persian and African customs.

Women's traditional custom consists of a long dress named Kandooreh, pants with special needle works, a big colored scarf named Leisoo, traditional mask named Borka, and traditional veil named Chida. Some rich women stick golden accessories to their masks. All of the traditional clothes are handmade. There is also a soft scarf with needlework named Jelwi which is used in the wedding ceremonies instead of Leisoo.

Men's custom is a long white dress named Jima or Dishdasha and a white or colored scarf tied around the head. Some men wear Araghchin which is a white hat with holes on it, instead of scarf.

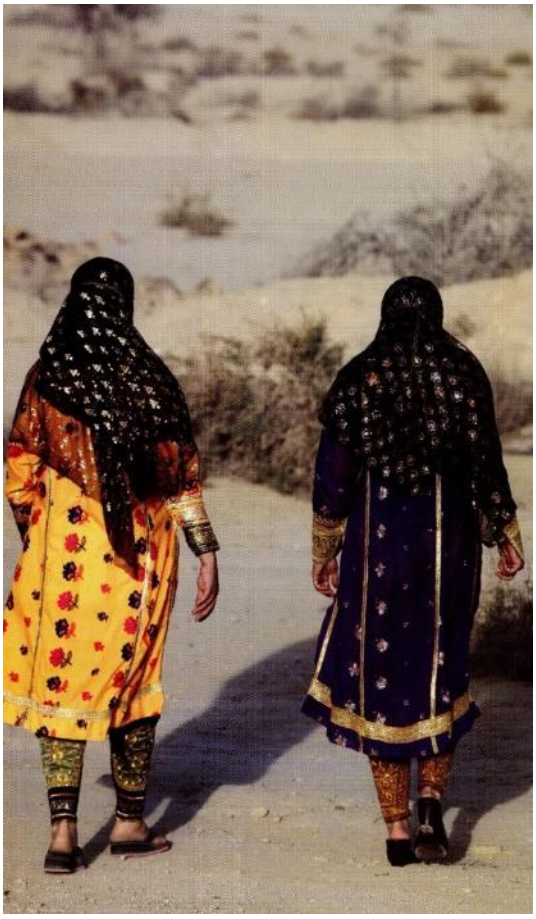


Figure 34. Women's traditional custom in Qeshm and adjacent islands, (photo: Abdulkhaliq Taheri, published in the book "Handicrafts of Qeshm Island")

Figure 35 Qeshmi woman wearing traditional custom, (photo: Ahmad Bazmandegan Qeshmi)

Figure 36. An old picture of Qeshmi girls wearing traditional custom, (unknown photographer)

Figure 37. Qeshmi men wearing traditional custom, (photo: Sepideh Shakeri Nasr)

Figure 38. A local man wearing "Araghchin"(traditional hat), (photo: Mobina Nourmohammadian)

2.6. Language

Our local language in Qeshm Island is called “Jazirati” which is a mixture of Iranian Farsi dialects including Larestani, Bandari, Minabi, Arabic, and some Hindi, Zanzibar and Habesha African language, English, and Portuguese.

Larak local people speak “Kumzari” language which.Although vulnerable, this language survives today with between 4,000 and 5,000 speakers. It is also spoken by Kumzaris in the Kumzar coast of Musandam Peninsula, northern Oman. This is the only Iranian language spoken exclusively in the Arabian Peninsula.

2.7. Traditional foods

Because of proximity to the sea, our main diet include a diverse range of seafood.

Figure 39. Qeshmi woman cooking traditional barbeque fish, (photo: Mobina Nourmohammadian)

Figure 40. Traditional barbeque fish, (photo: Mobina Nourmohammadian)

3. Our Ecosystems and their biodiversity

3.1. Marine & coastal ecosystems and biodiversity

Our territory is part of the Strait of Hormuz, a channel approximately 50km wide and 100m deep at its narrowest point that connects the Persian Gulf, a warm, hypersaline, shallow and semi-enclosed sea, to the Gulf of Oman, which is relatively more exposed to the deep component of the Arabian Sea in the North-West Indian Ocean. Qeshm Island and adjacent marine and coastal areas are greatly influenced by the less saline and nutrient-rich oceanic waters from the Indian Ocean, while the inner parts of the Persian Gulf tolerate more saline and less fertile conditions than those prevailing in most of the region. There are two seasons in the area: cold from December to March and warm from April to November.

The area plays the most significant role in the ecological and genetic connectivity across the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. This area has a wide range of coastal and marine habitats, including coral reefs, mangrove forests, seagrass beds, estuaries, and rocky, muddy and sandy shores. The coral reefs of the area are among the healthiest coral ecosystems in the Persian Gulf. There are 44 species of hard corals reported from the Persian Gulf; Iran has the highest number, with 37 and 24 species having been reported from Larak and Hengam Islands, respectively, representing the highest biodiversity of hard corals of the area within the Persian Gulf. The Qeshm Island and adjacent coastal and marine areas support significant feeding, breeding and nursery grounds for sea turtles, waterbirds, dolphins, reef fishes, sharks, rays and skates.

Our territory consists of two important mangrove forests of Iran, including Hara and Hara-e Khuran protected areas. These mangrove forests are also recognized as wetlands of international importance (Ramsar sites) and important bird areas by BirdLife International (IBAs). Their mangrove forests are monospecific stands of *Avicennia marina*. Hara and Hara-e Khuran protected areas run between the region of the Mehran and Kul/Rasul (Gol) deltas of the Iranian mainland and Qeshm Island (110km from east to west and up to 20 km across) and are also recognized as a biosphere reserve. Hara biosphere reserve supports the largest mangrove/mudflat ecosystem of the entire Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, with 100,000ha of mangroves, creeks, mudflats and low islands.

At least 120 bird species have been recorded in the Khuran Straits. The mangrove ecosystem of Khuran Straits supports substantial breeding populations of egrets and herons as well as some shorebirds (notably *Dromas ardeola* and *Burhinus recurvirostris*) and terns.

The extensive mudflats are an extremely important staging and wintering area for shorebirds and gulls, along with smaller numbers of Dalmatian pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*), Eurasian spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*), Greater flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) and many other species. The Khuran Straits area holds Iran's largest colony

of Indian pond heron (*Ardeola grayii*) (at least 30 pairs), and Striated heron (*Butorides striatus*) may breed here. The adjacent desertic plains, with scattered thorn trees and palm orchards, support a typical Baluchi avifauna with several primarily Indo-Malayan species.

The green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), finless porpoise (*Neophocaena phocaenoides*), Indo-pacific humpback dolphin (*Sousa plumbea*) and long-beaked common dolphins (*Delphinus capensis*) occur in the Khuran Straits regularly. The green sea turtle, Dalmatian pelican, crab plover and curlew are endangered species of the area with global importance. Regular sightings of finless porpoise by local people and researchers suggest it is likely that they breed in waters of Khuran Straits. This area is one of the most important breeding sites for the Annulated sea snake (*Hydrophis cyanocinctus*), which along with the Gulf Sea Snake (*H. lapemoides*) are the most abundant sea snakes in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. Sea snakes become entrapped in the trap nets used by local fishers for shrimp fishing, but they are not known as dangerous animals by the local people, and trapped snakes are usually being returned to the water alive.

This area is a critical habitat in the Persian Gulf for fish stocks, including silver pomfret (*Pampus argenteus*), Jinga shrimp (*Metapenaeus affinis*) and the green tiger prawn (*Penaeus Semisulcatus*).

The black rat (*Rattus rattus*) is the only rodent species that exists in the mangrove forests of Hara Biosphere Reserve. This has been reported as an invasive species with a significant impact on the reproduction of forest birds and breeding seabirds.

Qeshm Island

Due to its extensive sandy and muddy shores along the Qeshm Island, hard coral ecosystems are mainly restricted to two sites along the southern and southeastern shorelines. The southeast coast of Qeshm Island supports a coral reef area of approximately 45ha dominated by *Porites* species. One of the most unique soft coral beds in the Persian Gulf, locally called "*Gesher Springi"*, occurs in the deep waters of south Qeshm Island at depths of 40-60 meters. The recently discovered "Gesher Springi" is also an important foraging site for dolphins and sharks. The majority of Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops aduncus*) records in Iranian waters occur around Qeshm Island, in the narrow channel and a bay between Hengam and Qeshm islands called Deyrestan Bay. This species has also been frequently sighted in waters around Larak and Hormuz islands.

All five sea turtle species of the Persian Gulf occur in the waters around Qeshm Island and adjacent areas, including the critically endangered hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), endangered green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), endangered loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*), olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) and leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*). Qeshm Island is the largest and one of the most significant nesting sites in the Persian Gulf for the critically endangered hawksbill turtles. Each year, large numbers of hawksbill turtles come to lay their eggs in the soft sandy beaches

of the south coast of Qeshm Island. According to several interviews with local fishermen of Qeshm Island, green sea turtle nests used to be found in abundance in southern coasts and near Qeshm city.

Hengam Island

Hengam Island is located south of Qeshm Island and supports one of the healthiest coral reef ecosystems in the area. Coral reefs of Hengam Island are mainly concentrated on the northeastern parts of the island and are dominated by *Acropora* and *Porites* species. At least 24 species of hard corals have been reported from Hengam Island. This area is one of the most important foraging sites for dolphins and sea turtles. The most significant resident population of the Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops aduncus*) in the area occurs around Hengam Island and in Deyrestan Bay between Qeshm and Hengam Islands. The Indo-Pacific humpback dolphin (*Sousa plumbea*) also occurs around Hengam Island as a migratory species. The sandy coast of Hengam Island is also an important nesting site for hawksbill sea turtles. Deyrestan Bay is one of the most significant breeding and foraging sites for elasmobranch species, including sharks, rays and skates. Extensive seagrass beds also occur in Deyrestan Bay.

Larak Island

Larak Island is located in the Strait of Hormuz, approximately 17 km southwest of Hormuz Island and 9 km southeast of Qeshm Island. Larak Island is among the richest and healthiest hard coral and soft coral ecosystems in the entire Persian Gulf, which represent a biodiversity hotspot in the region, with at least 37 species of hard corals and 31 species of soft corals. Coral reefs of Larak Island are mainly dominated by *Acropora* and *Porites* species. Whales and whale sharks (*Rhincodon typus*) also frequently occur in waters around Larak Island.
Documented studies and unpublished data suggest that the three islands of Qeshm, Hengam and Larak comprise a triangular biodiversity hotspot within the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman.

Hormuz Island

Hormuz Island is located about 5 km off the Iranian mainland to the south of Tiab and Minab protected area. Shorelines of Hormuz Island are mainly sandy beaches, but there are some rocky shores and low cliffs, and a small tidal creek system with saltmarsh vegetation just east of the main harbour. Hormuz Island is recognized as an important bird area (IBA) by BirdLife International. This island is an important staging and/or wintering area for shorebirds, gulls and terns. The sandy shores of Hormuz Island are also recognized as an important nesting site for hawksbill turtles.

Figure 41. Mangrove ecosystem of Hara Biosphere Reserve, the largest mangrove forest of the Persian Gulf and Oman Sea (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 42. The Acropora-dominated coral reef of Hengam Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 43. The Porites-dominated coral reef of Hengam Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 44. Healthy Acropora-dominated coral reef of Larak Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 45. Large colony of Porites in coral reef of Larak Island, the oldest known coral reef ecosystem of the northern Persian Gulf (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 46. Resident Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins (Tursiops aduncus) in Deyrestan Bay between Qeshm and Hengam islands (photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 47. Sharks caught by local fishermen in Deyrestan Bay, South Qeshm Island (photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 48. Rocky intertidal shores of Qeshm Island with extensive tidal pools (photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 49. Extensive sandy intertidal shores of Qeshm Island (photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 50. Intertidal fauna of rocky shores of the area (photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 51. Intertidal fauna of rocky shores of the area (photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 52. Periophthalmus waltoni, the dominant mudskipper species in mangrove ecosystems of the area (photo: Koosha Dab).

Figure 53. Eurasian Spoonbill (Platalea leucorodia) in mangrove forest of the area (photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 54. Greater flamingo (Phoenicopterus roseus) in shallow waters of Tiab and Minab protected area (photo: Koosha Dab)

3.2. Terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity

Our territory is situated on a strip of sub-tropical Saharo-Sindian region in the northern hemisphere which gives it a unique geobotanical and phytogeographycal characteristics. The Saharo-Sindian region is generally known as the Khalijo-Omanian zone in Iran. This region is located along the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. Rainfall is limited to the winter season and does not exceed l00 mm per year in most of this region. The rains are torrential and irregularly distributed. The summer is long and extremely hot and dry. Despite its uniform climate, these islands has a variety of plant associations and plant habitats whose pattern of distribution is influenced by the soil, physiography, availability of water, and the extent of the soil salinity. In this region there are Saharo-Arabian, Sudanian and also Irano-Turanian plant species.These islands have trees and shrubs which are relatively widely separated and in some locations they have formed communities. There are 314 and 191 native plant species recorded from Qeshm and Hormuz Islands respectively.

Dominant woodlands of the area are *Acacia tortilis*, *Acacia tortilis- Prosopis cineraria*, *Acacia ehrenbergiana* and *Vachellia oerfota* communities. The invasive mesquite tree (*Prosopis juliflora*) is one of the most important threats to the native vegetation of these islands.

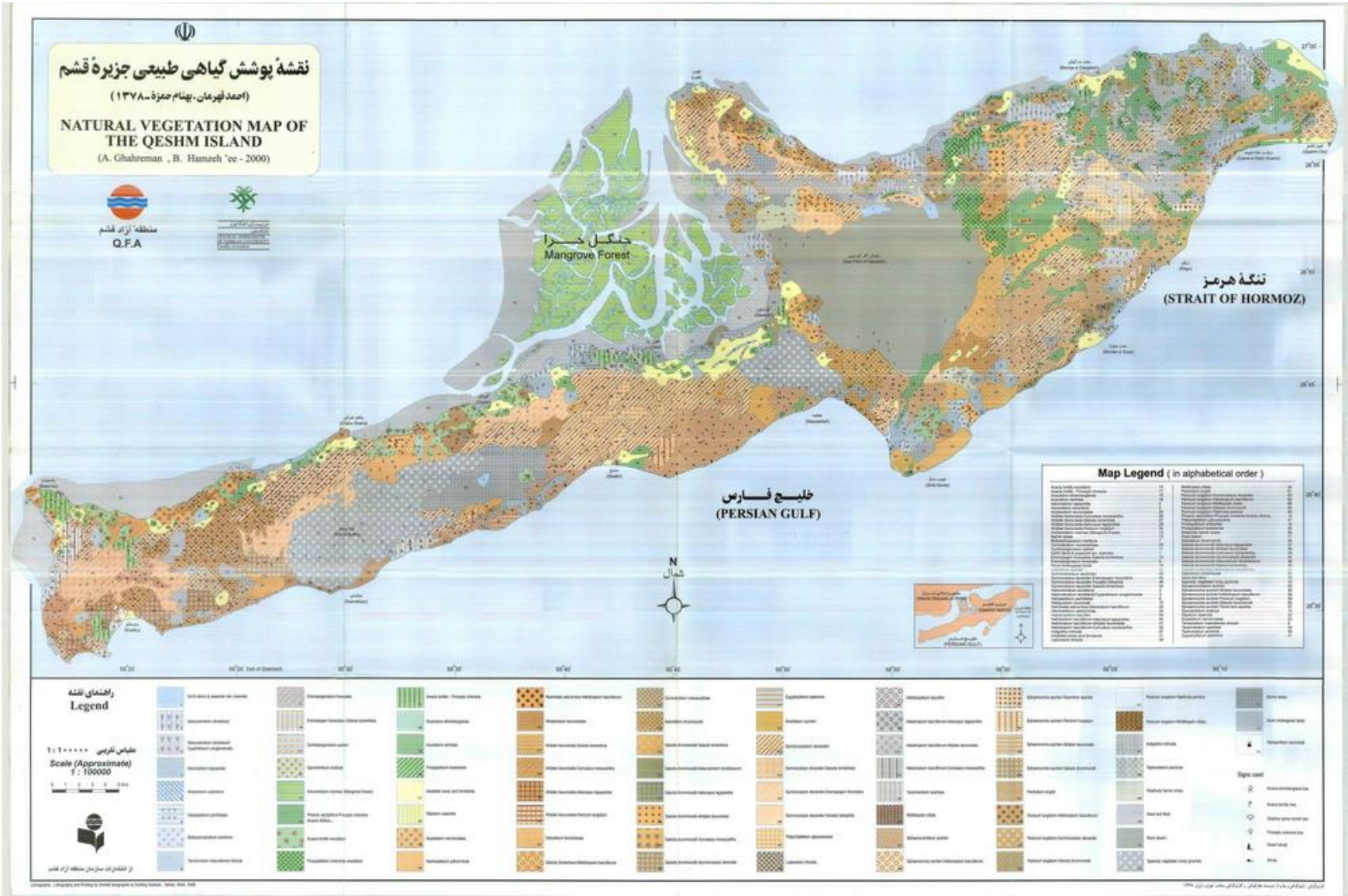


Figure 55. Natural vegetation map of Qeshm Island (Ghahreman A. and Hamzeh'ee)

Figure 56. Natural Savannah landscape of Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 57. Kahoor mesquite (Prosopis cineraria)

Figure 58. Grasslands of Qeshm Island in spring (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 59. Palm orchards invaded by mesquite tree (Prosopis juliflora)

The most important terrestrial mammals of the islands includes five species of bats including Egyptian Rousette (*Rousettus aegyptiacus*), several rodent species, Brandt's hedgehog (*Paraechinus hypomelas*), Hare (*Lepus* sp.), Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), Pygmy White-toothed Shrew (*Suncus etruscus*), Indian Grey Mongoose (*Herpestes edwardsii*), Small Indian Mongoose (*Herpestes javanicus*), and Jebeer or Indian gazelle (*Gazella bennettii*).

4. Where and how our cultural/ natural assets are recognized?

4.1. Qeshm Geopark

In 2007, Qeshm Island was recorded as the only Geo-Park in the Middle East by UNESCO. Qeshm Geopark has got a proper position in the region as it is located between Eastern Asian and European Geopark. In terms of geological variety as well as variety of its sites, Qeshm Geopark also carries an important image among the geoparks. Of course this variety is not limited to geological phenomena. There are other varieties in ecology, archeology, environment, wild nature, etc. Eight geosites are registered in Qeshm Geopark: 1. Salt Dome and the longest salt dome in the world; 2. Doulab village; 3. Chahkooh Canyon; 4. Shour valley; 5. Tandis-ha valley; 6. Stars valley; 7. Qeshm roof: a lookpoint; 8. Kor Kora Kooh: Hills of Mounds.

Figure 60. Chahkooh Canyon, Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 61. Shour valley, Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 62. Salt dome, Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 63. Stars valley, Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 64. Part of the brochure of Qeshm Geopark introduction (Published by Qeshm Geopark Office)

4.2. Protected areas, biosphere reserves, Ramsar sites, and Important Bird Areas

Hara Protected Area (85,686 ha) was established in 1973 to protect the most extensive stands of natural mangrove forest on the south coast of Iran. It was upgraded to National Park in the mid-1970s, but subsequently downgraded to Protected Area again in 1980. Hara-e Khuran Protected Area (2518 ha), which was established in 2001, is located just besides the Hara Protected Area. These two protected areas form a 100,000 hectare site designated as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention in June 1975. As a Contracting Party to the Ramsar Convention (the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat), the Government of Iran has an inherent commitment to maintain the ecological character of this wetland. The Protected Area was designated as a UNESCO (MAB) Biosphere Reserve in June 1976, and was identified as an 'Important Bird Area' (IBA) by Birdlife International in 1994.

Hormuz Island is also recognized as an IBA by BirdLife International.

Having been recognized as an international wetland in 1975, Tiab and Minab was designated as protected area in 2001. Located in the east of Bandar Abbas in Hormozgan province, the region has an area of 41258ha.

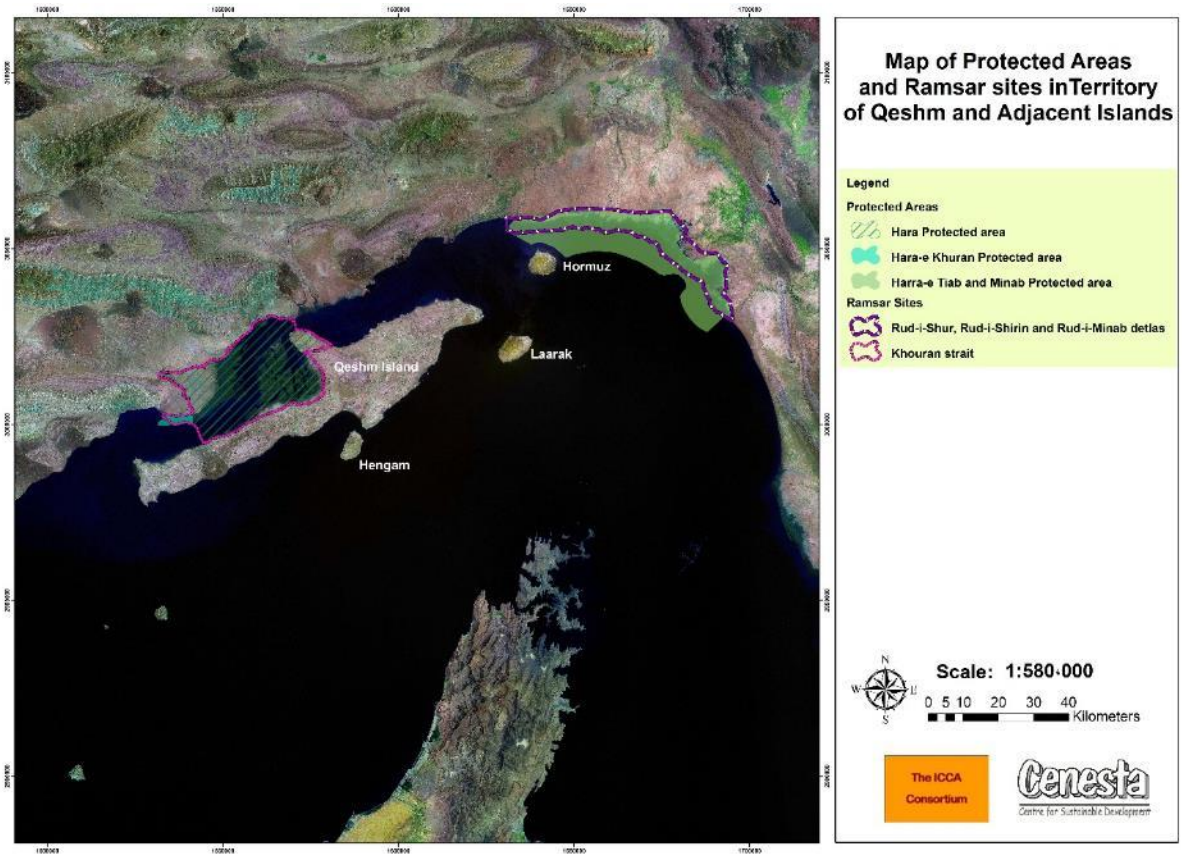


Figure 65. Khouran Strait (red), Hormuz Island (green), and Rud-i-Shur, Rud-i-Shirin and Rud-i-Minab detlas (the larger green) Important Bird Areas (source: birdlife.org)

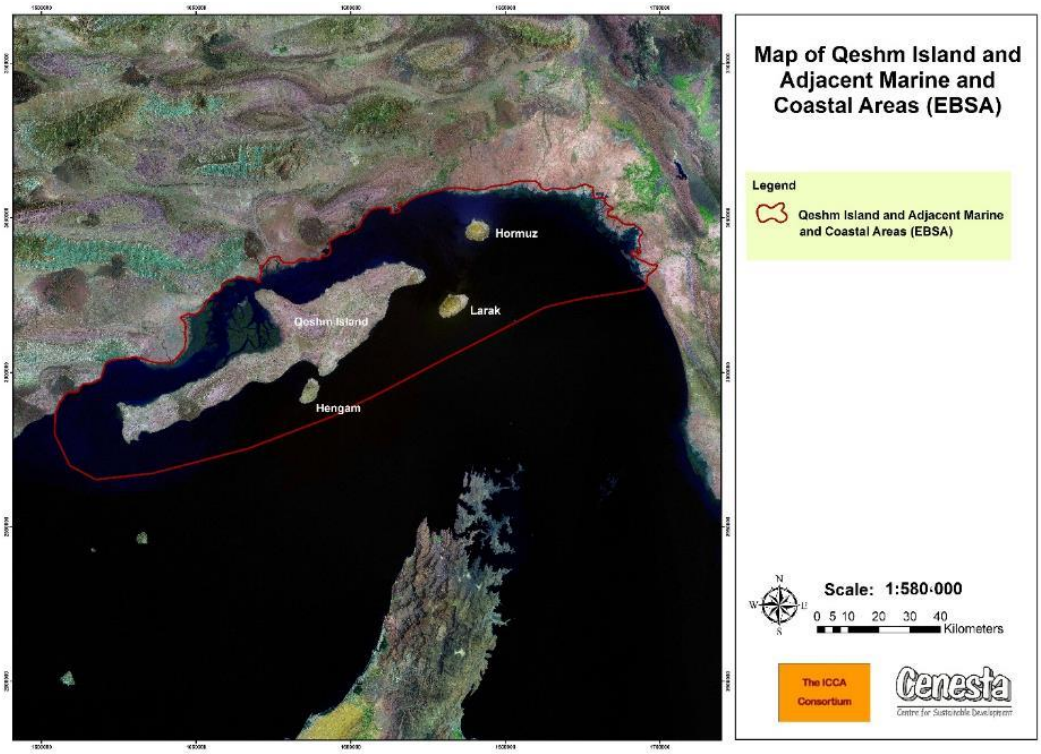
4.3. Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs)

Qeshm Island and adjacent marine and coastal areas were identified as areas of biological and ecological importance globally during the recently concluded regional workshop on Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) in the North-Western Indian Ocean and the adjacent gulf areas in April 2015 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates

This area were evaluated based on the criteria established during the 9th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. They were assessed according to their biological uniqueness or rarity, with special emphasis on the stages and phases of local species' life cycle. The criteria also looked into the importance of the region to endangered species as well as the degradation of habitats and their sensitivity, biological productivity and diversity, and other natural features.

The workshop was attended by representatives from the UAE, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Egypt and Jordan, Sudan, Eritrea, Pakistan, India as well as international and regional organisations.

When finalized the workshop report will be forwarded to the CBD Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice for review and then to the CBD Conference of the Parties (Mexico, November 2016). Later on, the report will be provided to the United Nations General Assembly.



4.4. Intangible Cultural Heritages

a) Building and sailing Iranian Lenj boats

Traditional *Lenj* boats in Iran are handmade wodden vessels that have been constructed and used since centuries ago by the indigenous peoples and local communities of the northern coast of the Persian Gulf and its islands. Main ports in the ancient times used to be Laft in Qeshm island and Kong and Lian on the mainland. These large boats were sailing in the open seas for trading and sea journeys up to to coasts of India and Africa, also for fishing and pearl diving in the Persian Gulf and the Oman Sea. **The traditional skills of building and sailing Iranian Lenj boats was inscribed on UNESCO's List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding in 2011.** This traditional knowledge includes the methods of navigation based on asthronomy by using Persian Astrolabe and Sextant to locate the latitude and longitude, as well as weather forcast based on the colour of the sea and height of waves. It also includes oral literature, special singing on the journey and performing arts on the land. Festivities such as *Norooz-e Sayyad* (Fisherman's New Year), *Bādebān-Keshi* (setting the sail) and traditional music performance of *Rezif* are examples of the intangible heritage. Although the construction site still exists in Laft and Gooran and some of other villages in the north of Qeshm Island, the knowledge of building Lenjes is in need of urgent safeguarding, since the main method of transmitting this knowledge which traditionally was going from father to son is now being left out an the boats themselves are being replaced by fiberglass preconstructed boats.

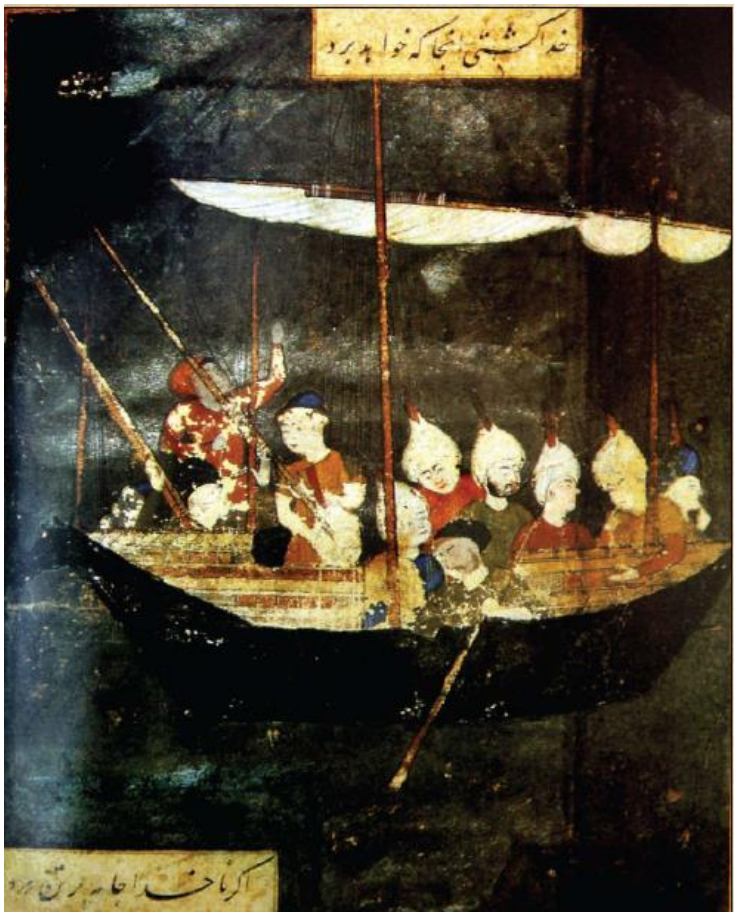


Figure 66. An old Iranian painting showing sails men in a Lenj boat

Figure 67. Traditional sailing in Lenj boats, Qeshm Island (Photo: Asghar Besharati)

Figure 68. Lenj boat, Laft village, Qeshm Island (photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 69. Lenj boats, Qeshm Island (photo: Ahmad Bazmandegan Qeshmi)

b) Baadgir

Baadgirs (Wind-catchers) are towers constructed in traditional houses and water reservoirs in central deserts of Iran as well as in the hot and humid coastal line of the Persian Gulf and Oman Sea. The four sided towers guide the outer air to the basement or to the subterranean water reservoirs. The air gets cool and exits the chamber from channels and valves in the summer room of the house and creates a pleasant atmosphere in the heat of summer. Baadgirs, which the **knowledge and tradition of constructing them are on the tentative list to be inscribed on the UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List**, are inseparable elements of traditional houses in hot deserts of Iran and their appearance differs in different regions. The main material for building Baadgir is mud and clay, and based on the colour of soil in any region, the colour and appearance of the Baadgirs are different. For example the Baadgirs and the houses of Laft in Qeshm Island are white, as oppose to beige colour of the constructions in the central desert such as in Yazd city. These architectural elements also were important to show the social status of the owner of the house; the richer the owner, the larger and more elaborate the Baadgirs were. As opposed to mechanized air-conditioning systems which depend heavily on consumption of electricity, Baadgirs are the sustainable solutions in the hot climate which conserve energy and are efficient, however in the recent years the construction of traditional houses and the wind catchers is decreasing. The knowledge of designing and constructing Baadgirs is usually transmitted orally and in practice from master to pupil and goes from generation to generation but popularity of modern lifestyle has threatened the continuous use of these ingenious elements of the past.

Figure 70. Laft village architecture (photo: Ahmad Bazmandegan)

4.5. Hormuz Island soil carpet

Hormuz Island consists of a huge salt dome topped, partly, by a rich variety of stones, sands and soil and abundant vegetation. It is unique in its multitude of colored soil: more than twenty colors and some ninety shades

In the winter of 2009, a group of young artists of Iran's southern Hormozgan province, and of Hormuz Island, came upon the idea of "weaving" a carpet out of colored soil at a flat depression on the western coast. Their intent was to draw the authorities' attention to the island's amazing ecology and the necessity of its

protection. Wielding the island's folk tales and its marvelous colorful sand and soil, the artists rose against apathy towards -and destructive exploitation of- its environmental health and beauty. Due, partly, to efforts by some fifty or so artists, the once neglected island has become a center of art and a magnet of tourism. In half a decade the yearly number of visitors to the soil carpet, alone, has grown from 7000 to 40000.

The first soil carpet design was based on the local folk legend of Mother Sea. In February 2014 the group presented its fifth carpet, the "Da Mahi. Da Mahi is the great fish full of motherly love, it swims the high seas and guides lost seamen safely back. A previous carpet was called "Melmedas", the legendary mermaid-like sea creature who had sickles for feet (hidden under the surface) with which she ripped sailors who had fallen for her beckoning. To the artists, Melmedas symbolizes today's material innovations and economic "gains" which destroy both nature and human moral values. Melmedas also symbolizes life and death, God and evil, hope and demise. Weaving legends is inherent to human soul. Legend helps man find the truth and displays human values. The role and meaning of legend has changed a lot for modern man, yet its symbolic and esthetic importance is unchanged.

Figure 71. Hormuz soil carpet (Photo: Fateme Zolfaghari)

5. Natural resources management systems

5.1. Traditional fishing methods

Traditional fishing methods are sustainable methods we have been used for centuries. Qeshm, Hengam, Hormuz and Larak fishermen use many fishing methods due to the season and place of fishing and type of the fish or shrimp being fished, but the most used methods in the present, are Gargoor and Moshta.

Gargoor is a fishing trap including a frame of wire mesh in the shape of a hemisphere or oval, with an entrance (It looks like a lobster trap but bigger). In the past it was made by wood and palm branches. Unfortunately now they make it is made by wire and Polyethylene pipes and mesh size has been decreased, therefore small fish cannot escape.

Figure 72. Gargoor; Traditional fishing gear (Photo: Sepideh Shakeri Nasr)

Fishing weirs have been used throughout the world as far back as 3000 years ago and were a fundamental gear of many coastal societies prior to the global spread of industrial fishing, starting in the 1950s. Although weir technologies differ across geographies, their basic purpose is to capture fish by limiting their movement without greatly impeding water flow. In the case of intertidal weirs, fish swimming parallel to shore at high tide encounter the “wing” and invariably try to escape by swimming into deeper water which leads them to the “yard” and eventually entering a smaller enclosure ,called “pocket”, where they are captured by the receding tides.

In the Persian Gulf, weirs (Arabic: Hadrah; Farsi: Moshta) are constructed in intertidal and shallow subtidal zones and catch a wide variety of marine species. Traditionally they were built using woven date palm and thin and long trunks of red mangrove, but today are made using nylon mesh and galvanized pipes or trunks of red mangrove. Although the Persian Gulf’s semi-diurnal tides allow weirs to be checked twice a day, in practice they are checked once.

Figure 73. Moshta; traditional fishing gear (Photo: Koosha Dab)

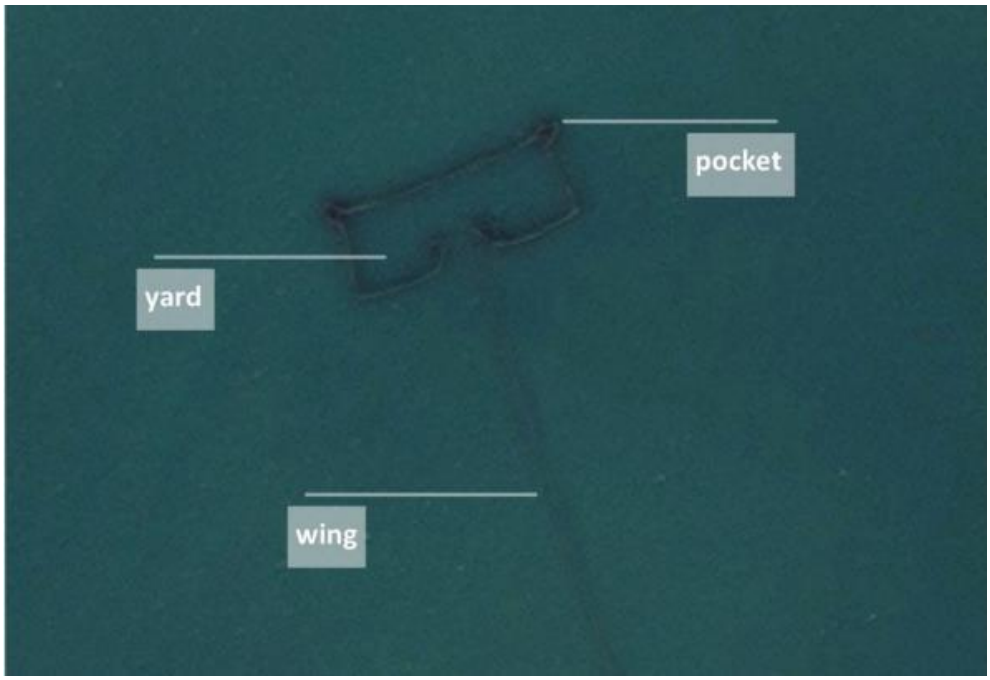


Figure 74. Satellite image of a Moshta around Qeshm Island (source: bing map)

We have a tradition among the fishermen which says that if a turtle is trapped in the net or Moshta or any other fishery gears, they should release the turtle, and it will bring you bliss and wealth.

Another traditional fishing rule which has made our fishery sustainable through hundred years, is forbidding fishing in the fish breeding seasons.

Figure 75. Local people releasing a sea turtle trapped in their fishing net, Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

5.2. Water resources management

In the past, Qeshm local people used to migrate to Minab city or other near ports in the mainland in summer to manage their palm orchards or work in others' palm orchards. So as the mount of available water in the island was limited, it would be saved for winter. This was a practical water resource management which is not used anymore. Nowadays, we try to prepare our water demand by water pumps and desalination plants.

Tela wells

In the entrance of Loft village, several water well's rings has been seen in the crater of hillside that were drilled via the region's natives in Achemenid and Zoroaster era in schist ricks of this region for saving the rain's water. Since the foundation of stone in this area is from plaster layers that cover the bottom of these wells, water remains cool in them for a long time. It has been said that the number of these wells were drilled 366 rings as the number of leap year but some were out of work and some still remain.
Methods and effective water use were extremely important in the past and it was a sustainable use of natural resources. Nowadays, because of the climate change and decrease in water resources and cultural changes in water uses (the modernization of lifestyles and consumption patterns), we use these wells less than before.

Mirab

A water guardian or water master known as Mirab, has carried out traditional water management of the water reservoirs.

Chalu

Holes with tight entry and wide end to prevent evaporation. Chalu's are usually dig across the rain run-offs to trap and reserve water.

Kombeh

Pots that are implanted in ground in flat or mountainous areas and across the rain run off to reserve water.

Drip irrigation by pots

This is a mechanism based on implanting pots of water in foot of date trees in summers. Permeation of water enables slow irrigation of dates in an efficient way.

Korband

Korband is a traditional spate irrigated system. Spate irrigation is defined as supplying flood water from ephemeral streams to farm fields and orchards by damming the streams.

Figure 76. Tella wells, Laft village, Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 77. Tella wells in winter, Laft village, Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 78. Korband, Tabl village, Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

Figure 79. water reservois, Qeshm Island (Photo: Koosha Dab)

6. Successful case studies in conservation and livelihoods

In the early 90s, Free Zone Authorities were established in southern Iran (Kish, Qeshm and Chabahar) to boost the economy through import and export of goods. The Master Plan of the Qeshm Fee Zone Authority was drafted by a Swedish Company, emphasizing on Sustainable Development. It was only in year 2001 that the Environment Office of Qeshm Fee Zone officially started its work. Through engagement of a top nature conservationist as Head of the Environment Office, and following up a thorough survey of the biodiversity aspects of the island by this office (2001-2007), it became obvious that the island has unique biodiversity values, which considering the fast pace of development by Qeshm Fee Zone could be undermined.

Around the same time, with ratification of the Convention for Biodiversity, Iran became eligible for grants by the Global Environment Facility. It was a good opportunity to work in the field of environmental conservation and learn the bottom-up approach of project formulation, implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation while working with local communities. The following presents some of SGP projects in the areas of Climate Change, International Waters and Biodiversity.

- Promoting traditional architectural and use of climate friendly concepts to save energy costs (Climate Change)
- Pilot Project on Artificial Reefs for Rehabilitation of Marine Resources of Qeshm Island in Salakh area (International Waters)
- Aquaculture of Pearl by Local Community of Berkeh Khalaf Village (International Waters)
- Onshore Preservation of Hawksbill turtle eggs through Community Participation (Biodiversity)
- Conservation vs. Tourism: Ecotourism Planning for the Turtle Nesting site near Shibderaz Village
- Dolphin watching and Conservation in Hengam Island (Biodiversity)
- Promoting Livelihoods for Women through Handicrafts

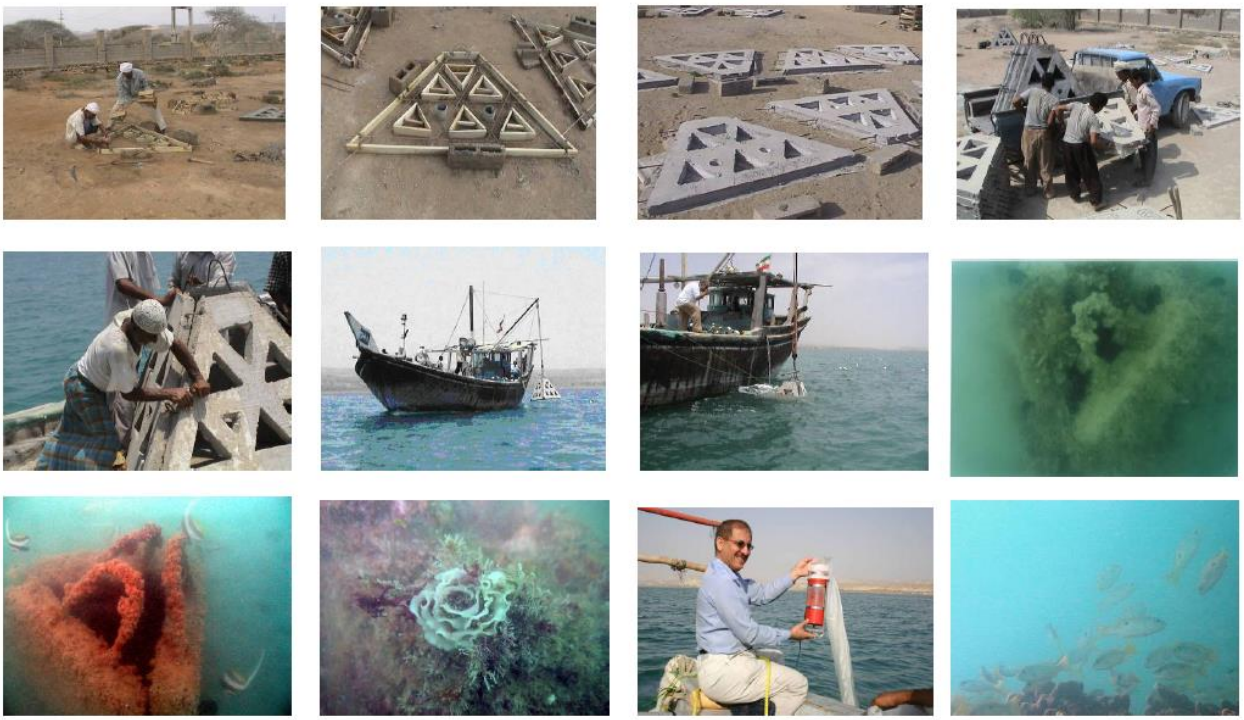


Figure 80. Pilot Project on Artificial Reefs for Rehabilitation of Marine Resources of Qeshm Island in Salakh area (source: Project bruchure, SGP)

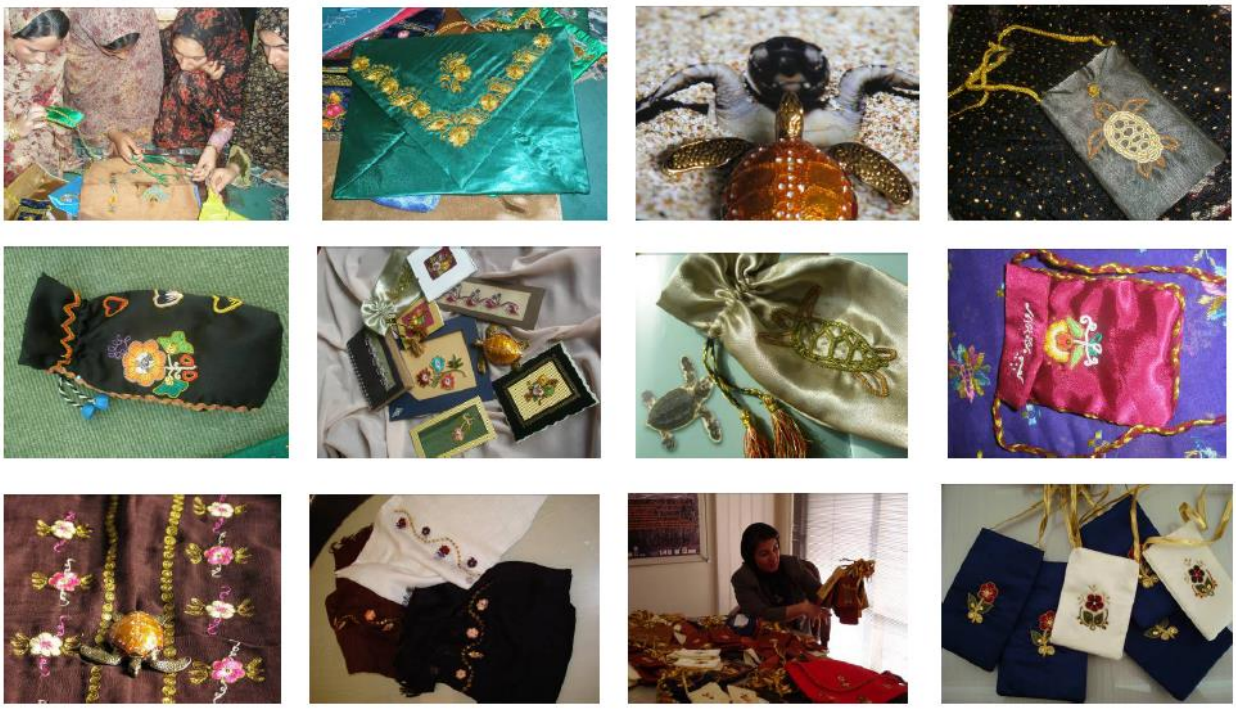


Figure 81. Promoting Livelihoods for Women through Handicrafts (source: Project bruchure, SGP)

7. Our legal identity

Our Community Based Organization named "Protectors of Qeshm Environment Institute" is under registration with support of Qeshm Free Zone and Cenesta's (Centre for Sustainable Development) facilitation. The elected board of the CBO are representatives of Qeshm and Hormuz Islands. The women committee and Sanduq are included in the statue of the CBO.

Figure 82. The election workshop for board of Protectors of Qeshm Environment Institute (Photo: Cenesta)

8. Our national and international rights

8.1. Our rights under national laws:

Even though there are no specific law and regulations in Iran's national legal framework concerning the Local Communities; but government has series of obligations towards us that have been recognized in some national laws. For example on the basis of Article 3(2) of Conservation and Exploitation of Natural Resources in Iran (By law, 2007) Iran Fisheries Organization (IFO) is obliged to consult with fishermen or their representatives and relevant Fishing Cooperatives' Unions and other stakeholders in preparation of management draft of fish stocks.
Moreover, in article 10 of the law of Conservation and Exploitation of the Fish of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1995), in order to protect coastal fisherman, activities of industrial fishing fleets in the coastal waters of Islamic Republic of Iran are prohibited.
And, finally to conserve fish stocks and fishing, Agricultural Products Insurance Fund, is obliged to catch insure fisheries, and other insurance companies are obliged to insure fishing equipment, according to the article 11(b) of the law of Conservation and Exploitation of the Fish.

8.2. Our rights under international law

We the indigenous people and local communities of Qeshm Island, in this bicultural community protocol identify the following principles and rights based on international law, (that further elaborated in appendix II, namely):

A. Principles

1. We are developers of breeds and custodians of our genetic resources (animals[1] and plants) for food and agriculture; and

2. Qeshm and the sustainable use of traditional breeds are highly dependent on the conservation of our ecosystem; and

3. Our traditional breeds represent collective property, products of traditional knowledge and our cultural expression.

B. Rights

We have the right to:

I: Make breeding decisions and breed the breeds they maintain.

[1] Domestic livestock and fish stock.

II: Participate in policy making and implementation processes on genetic resources (animal and plant) for food and agriculture.

III: Receive appropriate training and capacity building and equal access to relevant services enabling and supporting us to raise livestock and plants to improve process and marketing of our products.

IV: Participate in the identification of research needs and research design with respect to our genetic resources, as is mandated by the principle of Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC).

V: Effectively access information on issues related to our local breeds, livestock and plants diversity, effectively access to genetic resources and also appropriate access to benefit sharing.

We call on the Secretariat of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, specifically under Article 8(j) of the Convention, to recognize our contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in the mangrove ecosystem of Hara Biosphere Reserve, the largest mangrove forest in the Persian Gulf and Oman Sea.

9. Threats and challenges

- Industrial development
- Oil and gas industry
- Unsustainable tourism
- Mesquite invasion
- Industrial and illegal fishery
- Illegal sand exploitation
- Drought

Figure 83. Gavarzin Gas Plants, north Qeshm Island (Photo: Ahmad Bazmandegan)

Figure 84. massive tourism in winter, Qeshm city (Photo: Ahmad Bazmandegan)

Figure 85. Illegal sand exploitation (Photo: Koosha Dab)

A NOTE ABOUT THIS PROTOCOL

This protocol was developed by local communities of Qeshm, Hengam, Larak and Hormuz islands with input from Centre for Sustainable Development (Cenesta). The process was supported by League for Pastoral Peoples (LPP) and ICCA consortium.

APPENDIX: OUR PRINCIPLES UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW

We the indigenous people and local community of Qeshm, in this bicultural community protocol identify the following principles based on international law:

Principle 1:
We the indigenous people and local community of Qeshm are developers of breeds and custodians of our animal and plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

Over the course of history, we, the local community of the Qeshm, have managed and bred livestock, plants and Hara forest, selected and used them, thus shaping them so they are well-adapted to our environment and its extremes.
Preservation of it is a vital part of our culture and livelihoods. Yet our livelihoods are under the risk of loss of access to our traditional lands. This has endangered our food security and our way of life.

Principle 1 is supported by:

- Point 9 of the Interlaken Declaration on Animal Genetic Resources recognizes "that the genetic resources of animal species most critical to food security, sustainable livelihoods and human well-being are the result of both natural selection, and directed selection by smallholders, farmers, pastoralists and breeders, throughout the world, over generations".

- Point 12 of the Interlaken Declaration on Animal Genetic Resources recognizes "the enormous contribution that the local and indigenous communities and farmers, pastoralists and animal breeders of all regions of the world have made, and will continue to make for the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture".

- Part I Point 10 of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources: "all animal genetic resources for food and agriculture are the result of human intervention: they have been consciously selected and improved by pastoralists and farmers since the origins of agriculture, and have co-evolved with economies, cultures, knowledge systems and societies. Unlike most wild biodiversity, domestic animal resources require continuous active human management, sensitive to their unique nature". Biological Convention on Diversity 1992.

Principle 2:

Qeshm and the sustainable use of traditional breeds are highly dependent on the conservation of our ecosystem.

Our traditional species (animal and plants) are developed through the interaction between our livestock, pastoralists and natural environment. This natural environment is conserved, inter alia, through traditional practices of the Local Community of the Qeshm. The Qeshm local community therefore have a right to access our natural environment, so as to ensure the sustainable use and conservation of our species and the environment.

Principle 2 is supported by:

- Article 8 of the Convention on Biological Diversity: "genetic resources should be conserved in the surroundings in which they have developed their distinct properties".
- Article 10 (d) of the Convention on Biological Diversity demands that "local populations are supported to develop and implement remedial action in degraded areas where biological diversity has been reduce".
- Article 9.1 of the Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture provides that: The Contracting Parties recognize the enormous contribution that the local and indigenous communities and farmers of all regions of the world, particularly those in the centers of origin and crop diversity, have made and will continue to make for the conservation and development of plant genetic resources which constitute the basis of food and agriculture production throughout the world.

Principle3:
Our traditional breeds represent collective property, products of indigenous knowledge and our cultural expression.

While the local community of Qeshm have collective custodianship rights over our Genetic resources and the traditional knowledge related to these species, it is crucial that these rights are supported and promoted by the government.
Our government should therefore respect, preserve and maintain the knowledge, innovations and practices of the local community of Qeshm embodying lifestyles relevant to sustainable use and conservation of biological diversity.

Principle 3 is supported by:

- Article 24 (2) of the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 Relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (1995) In giving effect to the duty to cooperate in the establishment of conservation and management measures for straddling fish stocks and highly

migratory fish stocks, States shall take into account the special requirements of developing States, in particular: (b) the need to avoid adverse impacts on, and ensure access to fisheries by, subsistence, small-scale and artisanal fishers and women fishworkers, as well as indigenous people in developing States, particularly small island developing States;

- Article 8 (j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity: "Contracting Party shall…Subject to its national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge, innovations and practices.
- Article 10 (c) of the Convention on Biological Diversity: obliges Parties to "protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation and sustainable use requirements".
- Article 17 (1) (c) of the United Nations Convention on Combat Desertification (UNCCD): protect, integrate, enhance and validate traditional and local knowledge, know-how and practices, ensuring, subject to their respective national legislation and/or policies, that the owners of that knowledge will directly benefit on an equitable basis and on mutually agreed terms from any commercial utilization of it or from any technological development derived from that knowledge;
- Article 18 (1) (b) of the UNCCD: facilitate access, in particular by affected developing country Parties, on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, taking into account the need to protect intellectual property rights, to technologies most suitable to practical application for specific needs of local populations, paying special attention to the social, cultural, economic and environmental impact of such technology;
- Article 18 (2): The Parties shall, according to their respective capabilities, and subject to their respective national legislation and/or policies, protect, promote and use in particular relevant traditional and local technology, knowledge, know-how and practices.
- Article 19 (1) (d) of the UNCCD: The Parties recognize the significance of capacity building -- that is to say, institution building, training and development of relevant local and national capacities -- in efforts to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought. They shall promote, as appropriate, capacity-building: by fostering the use and dissemination of the knowledge, know-how and practices of local people in technical cooperation programs, wherever possible;
- The preamble of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage states that: Recognizing that communities, in particular indigenous

communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals, play an important role in the production, safeguarding, maintenance and re-creation of the intangible cultural heritage, thus helping to enrich cultural diversity and human creativity; and Considering the invaluable role of the intangible cultural heritage as a factor in bringing human beings closer together and ensuring exchange and understanding among them.

- Article 1(b) Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: to ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of the communities, groups and individuals concerned;
- Article 15 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage : Participation of communities, groups and individuals Within the framework of its safeguarding activities of the intangible cultural heritage, each State Party shall endeavor to ensure the widest possible participation of communities, groups and, where appropriate, individuals that create, maintain and transmit such heritage, and to involve them actively in its management;
- Article 17 (1) (C) of the UNCCD: protect, integrate, enhance and validate traditional and local knowledge, know-how and practices, ensuring, subject to their respective national legislation and/or policies, that the owners of that knowledge will directly benefit on an equitable basis and on mutually agreed terms from any commercial utilization of it or from any technological development derived from that knowledge;
- Article 5 (5) of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing: Each Party shall take legislative, administrative or policy measures, as appropriate, in order that the benefits arising from the utilization of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources are shared in a fair and equitable way with indigenous and local communities holding such knowledge. Such sharing shall be upon mutually agreed terms;
- Article 7 of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing: In accordance with domestic law, each Party shall take measures, as appropriate, with the aim of ensuring that traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources that is held by indigenous and local communities is accessed with the prior and informed consent or approval and involvement of these indigenous and local communities, and that mutually agreed terms have been established;
- Article 12 (1) of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing: In implementing their obligations under this Protocol, Parties shall in accordance with domestic law take into consideration indigenous and local communities' customary laws, community protocols and procedures, as applicable, with respect to traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources.

Based on the above mentioned principles articulated and implicit in existing legal instruments and international agreements, indigenous people and local community of

Qeshm, who belong to traditional livestock and fish stock keeping community and adhere to ecological principles of animal production affirm the following rights:

I: Indigenous people and local community of Qeshm have the right to make breeding decisions and breed the breeds they maintain.

This right is supported by:

- Article 26 (1) of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity 2000: The Parties, in reaching a decision on import under this Protocol or under its domestic measures implementing the Protocol, may take into account, consistent with their international obligations, socio-economic considerations arising from the impact of living modified organisms on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, especially with regard to the value of biological diversity to indigenous and local communities;
- Article 9(1) (4) Aquaculture Development of Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries: States should ensure that the livelihoods of local communities, and their access to fishing grounds, are not negatively affected by aquaculture developments;
- Article 10 (c) of the Convention on Biological Diversity: obliges parties to “protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation and sustainable use requirements”;
- Article 11(1) of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing: In instances where the same genetic resources are found *in situ* within the territory of more than one Party, those Parties shall endeavour to cooperate, as appropriate, with the involvement of indigenous and local communities concerned, where applicable, with a view to implementing this Protocol.

II: The indigenous people and local community of Qeshm have the right to participate in policy making and implementation processes of genetic resources (animal and plant) for food and agriculture.

This right is supported by:

- Article 8 (j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity: obliges parties to"… promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge, innovations and practices.”
- Article 2 (f) of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries: The objectives of the Code are to: promote the contribution of fisheries to food security and food quality, giving priority to the nutritional needs of local communities;

- Article 3 of the UNCCD: the Parties shall be guided, inter alia, by the following: the Parties should ensure that decisions on the design and implementation of programmes to combat desertification and/or mitigate the effects of drought are taken with the participation of populations and local communities and that an enabling environment is created at higher levels to facilitate action at national and local levels;
- Article 10 (2) of the UNCCD: National action programmes shall specify the respective roles of government, local communities and land users and the resources available and needed. They shall, inter alia; Article 10 (2)(b): allow for modifications to be made in response to changing circumstances and be sufficiently flexible at the local level to cope with different socio-economic, biological and geo-physical conditions; Article 10 (2)(f): provide for effective participation at the local, national and regional levels of non-governmental organizations and local populations, both women and men, particularly resource users, including farmers and pastoralists and their representative organizations, in policy planning, decision-making, and implementation and review of national action programmes.
- Article 16 of the UNCCD: The Parties agree, to ensure systematic observation of land degradation in affected areas and to understand better and assess the processes and effects of drought and desertification. This would help accomplish, inter alia, early warning and advance planning for periods of adverse climatic variation in a form suited for practical application by users at all levels, including especially local populations. To this end, they shall, as appropriate: (b) ensure that the collection, analysis and exchange of information address the needs of local communities and those of decision makers, with a view to resolving specific problems, and that local communities are involved in these activities;
- Article 11(1) of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing: In instances where the same genetic resources are found *in situ* within the territory of more than one Party, those Parties shall endeavour to cooperate, as appropriate, with the involvement of indigenous and local communities concerned, where applicable, with a view to implementing this Protocol.
- Article 12 (2) of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing: Parties, with the effective participation of the indigenous and local communities concerned, shall establish mechanisms to inform potential users of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources about their obligations, including measures as made available through the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House for access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge.
- Article 22 (1) of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing: The Parties shall cooperate in the capacity-building, capacity development and strengthening of human resources and institutional capacities to effectively implement this Protocol… In this context, Parties should facilitate the involvement of indigenous and local communities

and relevant stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

III- The indigenous people and local community of Qeshm shall have the right to appropriate training and capacity building and equal access to relevant services enabling and supporting us to raise livestock and plants to better process and market our products.

This right is supported by:

- Article 5 of the UNCCD: affected country Parties undertake to:
- (d) Promote awareness and facilitate the participation of local populations, particularly women and youth, with the support of non- governmental organizations, in efforts to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought;
- Article 10 (2) (e) of the UNCCD: promote policies and strengthen institutional frameworks which develop cooperation and coordination, in a spirit of partnership, between the donor community, governments at all levels, local populations and community groups, and facilitate access by local populations to appropriate information and technology;
- Article 13(1) (c) of the UNCCD: increased flexibility in project design, funding and implementation in keeping with the experimental, iterative approach indicated for participatory action at the local community level.
- Article 19(1) of the UNCCD: The Parties recognize the significance of capacity building -- that is to say, institution building, training and development of relevant local and national capacities -- in efforts to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought. They shall promote, as appropriate, capacity-building:
  (a) Through the full participation at all levels of local people, particularly at the local level, especially women and youth, with the cooperation of non-governmental and local organizations;
- Article 9(2) of International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture: In accordance with farmers' needs and priorities, each Contracting Party should, as appropriate, and subject to its national legislation, take measures to protect and promote Farmers' Rights, including:

(a) Protection of traditional knowledge relevant to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture;

(b) The right to equitably participate in sharing benefits arising from the utilization of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

- Article 3(d) of the UNCCD: "develop and exchange educational and public awareness material, where possible in local languages, exchange and second experts to train personnel of affected developing country Parties in carrying out relevant education and awareness programmes, and fully utilize relevant educational material available in competent international bodies;

- Article 5 (2) of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing: Each Party shall take legislative, administrative or policy measures, as appropriate, with the aim of ensuring that benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources that are held by indigenous and local communities, in accordance with domestic legislation regarding the established rights of these indigenous and local communities over these genetic resources, are shared in a fair and equitable way with the communities concerned, based on mutually agreed terms.
- Article 12 (2) of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing: Parties, with the effective participation of the indigenous and local communities concerned, shall establish mechanisms to inform potential users of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources about their obligations, including measures as made available through the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House for access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge.

IV- The indigenous people and local community of Qeshm have the right to Participate in the identification of research needs and research design with respect to our genetic resources, as is mandated by the principle of Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC).

This right is supported by:

- Article 9(2) (c) International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture: The right to participate in making decisions, at the national level, on matters related to the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

- Article 17 (1) of the UNCCD: The Parties undertake, according to their respective capabilities, to promote technical and scientific cooperation in the fields of combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought through appropriate national, sub-regional, regional and international institutions. To this end, they shall support research activities that: (b) Respond to well defined objectives, address the specific needs of local populations and lead to the identification and implementation of solutions that improve the living standards of people in affected areas; (c) protect, integrate, enhance and validate traditional and local knowledge, know-how and practices, ensuring, subject to their respective national legislation and/or policies, that the owners of that knowledge will directly benefit on an equitable basis and on mutually agreed terms from any commercial utilization of it or from any technological development derived from that knowledge; (d) develop and strengthen national, sub-regional and regional research capabilities in affected developing country Parties, particularly in Africa, including the development of local skills and the strengthening

of appropriate capacities, especially in countries with a weak research base, giving particular attention to multidisciplinary and participative socio-economic research.

- Article 18 (1)(b) of the UNCCD: "ensure that such technology, knowledge, know-how and practices are adequately protected and that local populations benefit directly, on an equitable basis and as mutually agreed, from any commercial utilization of them or from any technological development."

- Article 7 of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing: In accordance with domestic law, each Party shall take measures, as appropriate, with the aim of ensuring that traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources that is held by indigenous and local communities is accessed with the prior and informed consent or approval and involvement of these indigenous and local communities, and that mutually agreed terms have been established.

- Article 6 (2) of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing: In accordance with domestic law, each Party shall take measures, as appropriate, with the aim of ensuring that the prior informed consent or approval and involvement of indigenous and local communities is obtained for access to genetic resources where they have the established right to grant access to such resources.

IIV: The indigenous people and local community of Qeshm have the right to effectively access information on issues related to our local breeds, livestock and Plants diversity, effectively access to genetic resources and also appropriate access to benefit sharing.

This right is supported by:

- Article 17 (1)(f) of the UNCCD: promote the conduct of joint research programmes between national, sub regional, regional and international research organizations, in both the public and private sectors, for the development of improved, affordable and accessible technologies for sustainable development through effective participation of local populations and communities.

- Article 16 of the UNCCD: The Parties agree, to ensure systematic observation of land degradation in affected areas and to understand better and assess the processes and effects of drought and desertification. This would help accomplish, inter alia, early warning and advance planning for periods of adverse climatic variation in a form suited for practical application by users at all levels, including especially local populations. To this end, they shall, as appropriate: (g) subject to their respective

national legislation and/or policies, exchange information on local and traditional knowledge, ensuring adequate protection for it and providing appropriate return from the benefits derived from it, on an equitable basis and on mutually agreed terms, to the local populations concerned.

- Article 18 (1)(a) of the UNCCD: make inventories of such technology, knowledge, know-how and practices and their potential uses with the participation of local populations, and disseminate such information, where appropriate, in cooperation with relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;

- Article 3(d) of the UNCCD: "develop and exchange educational and public awareness material, where possible in local languages, exchange and second experts to train personnel of affected developing country Parties in carrying out relevant education and awareness programmes, and fully utilize relevant educational material available in competent international bodies.

- Article 6(19) of Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries: States should consider aquaculture, including culture-based fisheries, as a means to promote diversification of income and diet. In so doing, States should ensure that resources are used responsibly and adverse impacts on the environment and on local communities are minimized.

- Article 6 (3) (f) of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing: each Party requiring prior informed consent shall take the necessary legislative, administrative or policy measures, as appropriate, to: Where applicable, and subject to domestic legislation, set out criteria and/or processes for obtaining prior informed consent or approval and involvement of indigenous and local communities for access to genetic resources.

- Article 12 (3) of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing: Parties shall endeavour to support, as appropriate, the development by indigenous and local communities, including women within these communities, of: (a) Community protocols in relation to access to traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of such knowledge; (b) Minimum requirements for mutually agreed terms to secure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources; and (c) Model contractual clauses for benefit-sharing arising from the utilization of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources.

- Article 12 (4) of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing: Parties, in their implementation of this Protocol, shall, as far as possible, not restrict the customary use

and exchange of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge within and amongst indigenous and local communities in accordance with the objectives of the Convention.

- Article 13 (1) of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing. Each Party shall designate a national focal point on access and benefit-sharing. The national focal point shall make information available as follows: (a) For applicants seeking access to genetic resources, information on procedures for obtaining prior informed consent and establishing mutually agreed terms, including benefit-sharing; (b) For applicants seeking access to traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, where possible, information on procedures for obtaining prior informed consent or approval and involvement, as appropriate, of indigenous and local communities and establishing mutually agreed terms including benefit-sharing; (c) Information on competent national authorities, relevant indigenous and local communities and relevant stakeholders.

- Article 16 (1) of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing: Each Party shall take appropriate, effective and proportionate legislative, administrative or policy measures, as appropriate, to provide that traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources utilized within their jurisdiction has been accessed in accordance with prior informed consent or approval and involvement of indigenous and local communities and that mutually agreed terms have been established, as required by domestic access and benefit-sharing legislation or regulatory requirements of the other Party where such indigenous and local communities are located.

- Article 21 of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing: Each Party shall take measures to raise awareness of the importance of genetic resources and traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, and related access and benefit-sharing issues. Such measures may include, inter alia: (b) Organization of meetings of indigenous and local communities and relevant stakeholders; (c) Establishment and maintenance of a help desk for indigenous and local communities and relevant stakeholders; (e) Promotion of voluntary codes of conduct, guidelines and best practices and/or standards in consultation with indigenous and local communities and relevant stakeholders; (h) Involvement of indigenous and local communities and relevant stakeholders in the implementation of this Protocol; and Awareness-raising of community protocols and procedures of indigenous and local communities.