



United Nations Environment Programme

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PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT • PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE
ПРОГРАММА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЕ

PRESS RELEASE

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Afghanistan – Iran Technical Meeting on the shared Sistan Basin Wetlands

Geneva, Switzerland – The second Afghanistan-Iran technical meeting on the shared Sistan Basin wetlands (also known as the Hamoons) was hosted by UNEP in Geneva from 15-18 May 2006. This follows on a first meeting in December 2005, and was attended by inter-ministerial delegations led by the environmental authorities of both countries as well as UNDP and UNDP GEF.

Agreement was reached to develop a joint GEF project proposal and to prepare the terms of reference for a Joint Committee on the Sistan Basin Wetlands, due to be finalised at the next meeting in November 2006.

A closed inland wetland delta nourished mainly by the Helmand River, the Hamoon system has collapsed due to prolonged drought and human interventions, engendering a humanitarian and environmental disaster reminiscent to that of the Aral Sea. In 2005, a medium sized flood helped revitalise the Hamoons but this was short-lived and the wetlands are dry again.

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