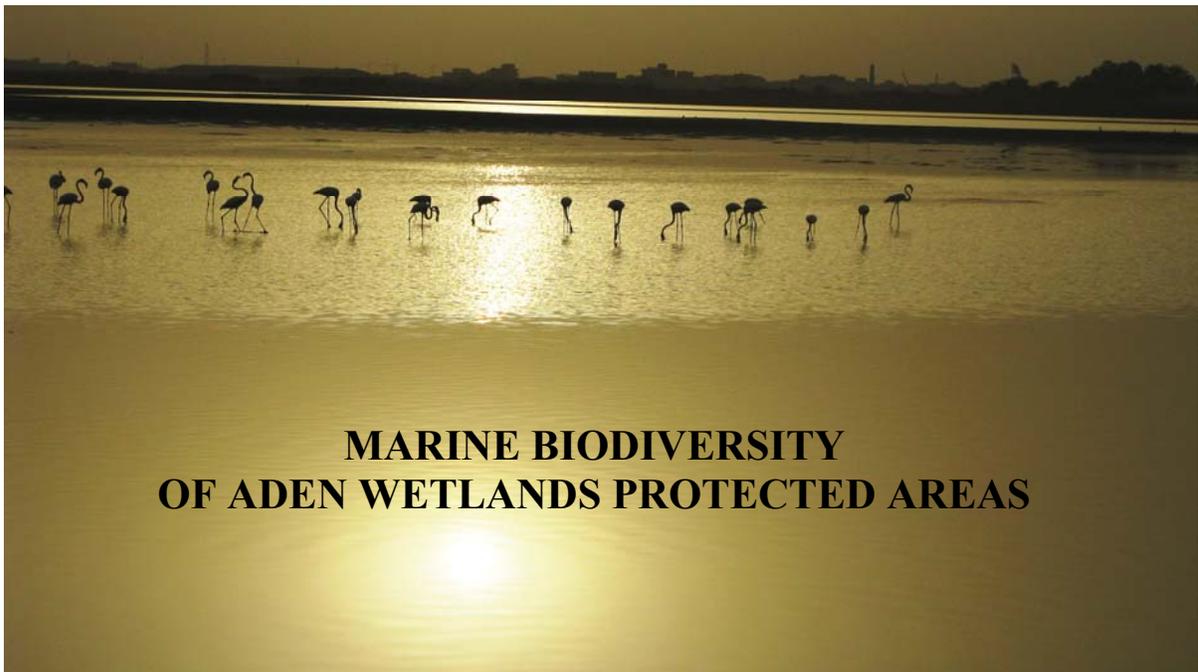


REPUBLIC OF YEMEN
Yemen Society for the Protection of Wildlife
Environmental Protection Authority

Aden Wetlands Conservation Project



**MARINE BIODIVERSITY
OF ADEN WETLANDS PROTECTED AREAS**

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Executive summary

The Yemen Society for the Protection of Wildlife (YSPW) and BirdLife Middle East Division (BLMED) received funding for Planning and Creation of a Site Management Plan for Aden Wetlands within the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Global Environment Facility (GEF), African Eurasian Flyway (Wings Over Wetlands-WOW) Project. United Nation for Project Service is the executing agencies of the GEF funded project. The project is implemented in 11 countries a long the flyway in Which Aden wetlands, Yemen serves as demonstration project for the Middle East region. The entire project is coordinated by Wetlands International based in the Netherlands and BirdLife International Middle East Division is the executing Agency of the project who subcontracted BirdLife Affiliate YSPW as the field implementing organization on site.

The Aden wetlands are amongst the most important wetlands in Yemen and in the region, they represent a rich natural heritage and are considered a great numbers of marine flora and fauna and provided a suitable habitats for huge numbers of migration water birds which use them as feeding and roosting areas during their annual migration from and to Europe, Asia and Africa.

The government of Yemen through Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) is taking serious steps and great efforts to conserve the natural heritage and there resources in Yemen.

The WOW demonstration project in the Aden Wetlands aims at corroborating the management plan for Aden wetlands Protected areas (PAs) ,they included Aden lagoons, Al Mimlah, Caltex-Al-Heswa swamp and Khor Bir Ahmed.

The Yemen Society for the Protection of Wildlife (YSPW), the BirdLife affiliate in Yemen and BirdLife Middle East Division are jointly executing this demonstration project in close collaboration and synergy with parallel ongoing conservation initiatives of the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) (Ministry of Water and Environment - MWE) and UNDP in the same area.

The five of Aden wetlands PAs were selected to be subjected for a rapid ecological assessment of marine biodiversity and habitats, in addition to identify species abundance and threats to biodiversity as well.

This study represents an inventory of marine Flora & Fauna of five Aden wetlands PAs. based on field survey conduct in June-July 2009 and analysis of acceptable data from previous studies and reports in the area. An inventory of marine Flora and Fauna was carried out.

Aden wetlands are found to be enjoyed a special habitats which include, Khors, lagoons, sabkhas, sand and silt- mud flats. and marine biodiversity such as Sea grasses, macro algae, crustaceans, mollusks, fishes.

Human impacts were Clearly observed in the sites, like land fill ,sewage damping, solid waste, over fishing.

List of Abbreviation

AWCP	Aden Wetlands Conservation Project
BLMED	BirdLife Middle East Division
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment.
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographical Information System
MSRRC	Marine Science Resources Research Center
MEP	Mac Alister Elliot & Partners
MP	Master Plan
MWE	Ministry of Water and Environment,
NE	North East
PAs	Protected areas
PERSGA	Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.
SW	South West
SNRMP	Sustainable Natural Resources Management Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WOW	Wings Over Wetlands
YSPW	Yemen Society for the Protection of Wildlife

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1- Introduction:

The Gulf of Aden represents a unique and diverse collection of habitats and biodiversity that have resulted in the unusual geographical and climatic conditions that exist in the area.

The Aden wetlands are amongst the most important wetlands in Yemen and the region, they support unique marine biodiversity and host a large number of waterbird species and are considered an important wintering area for migratory waterfowl.

The government of Yemen through the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) is taking serious steps and great efforts to conserve the natural heritage and its resources, where the Ministers Council of Yemen has issued a decree No.304 in August 2006 announcing Aden wetlands as a protected area, they comprise Aden lagoons, Al Mimlah, Caltex-Al-Heswa swamp, Al-Wadi Al-Kabir outlet, and Khor Bir Ahmed. (Figure 1). Following this the Ministerial Decree No.249 in July 2008 regarding establishment and management of protected areas of Aden wetlands.

EPA through the Sustainable Natural Resources Management Program (SNRMP), funded by UNDP, has prepared different studies regarding Aden wetlands among them marine biodiversity study for Aden wetlands which was conducted in 2006. which covered all 5th PAs.

This document was prepared for the Aden Wetlands Conservation Project (AWCP) under the UNEP-GEF African Eurasian Flyways (Wings Over Wetlands-WOW) demonstration Project, where the Yemeni Society for the Protection of Wildlife (YSPW) and BirdLife Middle East Division (where the BirdLife International Middle Secretariat as the Regional Hub for Wings Over Wetlands) received funding for planning and creation of a Site Management Plan for Aden Wetlands within the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Global Environment Facility (GEF).

YSPW and EPA through the document of Aden Wetlands Conservation Project conducted several activities addressed to conserve habitats and biodiversity of Aden wetlands and raise awareness among different categories in Aden governorate.

The primary objectives of this work are:

- establish an inventory of marine biodiversity and key species in the Aden wetlands PAs.
- Viewing human activities patterns and key environmental pressures in the Aden wetlands PAs.
- Continuing survey and monitoring to update inventory database.

The report contains background information and methodology. The general inventory of flora and fauna species of Aden wetlands resulting from the field survey is provided in tables. Photos are found adjacent to the relevant texts, and provide recommendations.

2- Marine and Coastal Physical Environment of Aden wetlands

Aden wetlands lies in Aden Governorate on the northern shore of the Gulf of Aden. The coast line of Aden Governorate extends for approximately 180km. from Ras Qawa in the west to Al Alm point in the east.

The coastal area of Aden is part of the south coast area of Yemen, which has a hot climate with low rainfall where not exceeding 50mm annually and may increase to 100mm in exceptional years.

. Climatically Aden is located under influence to distinct monsoonal seasons. The South West (SW) monsoon of the Indian ocean occurs between the months of May and September in summer, while the North East (NE) monsoon is influential between October and April in winter. Where the maximum of temperature 36.5°C in summer. In winter the minimum temperature reach to 22°C. the relative humidity in Aden has a mean annual value of 75%.

The coast line of Aden Governorate comprises different topographic features: headlands and cliffs in the volcanic mountains interspersed with sandy bays in Aden and Little Aden peninsulas. Coastal plan and Khors in Abyn beach, Khor Maksar, Bandar Tawahe and Bandar Imran. and Al Wadi Al Kabeer, the down west branch of Wadi Toban the one Wadi outlet in the sea.

The Gulf of Aden is dominated by the Indian Ocean monsoon system. During winter period between November and March, the NE monsoon produces a prevailing easterly winds. During the summer months June to September, the SW monsoon produces a prevailing SW winds. These winds cause the phenomenon of upwelling, which brings cool deep water, rich by nutrients to the surface. These different types of monsoons are responsible for water change between the Gulf of Aden and the Red sea, on one side ,and with the Indian ocean, through the Arabian Sea, on the other. All these produces conductive conditions for the formation of high biodiversity in the marine life in the area. (Spridonov,1985)

3-Objectives and Scope of Work

This survey study was undertaken to the marine biodiversity of Aden wetlands Protected Areas (PAs) under Aden wetlands Conservation Project (AWCP) which implemented by The Yemen Society for the Protection of Wildlife (YSPW) cooperation with Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to establish a baseline data for marine fauna and flora species and threats which facing them in the protected areas and adjoining areas.

The primary objectives were to describe marine Flora and Fauna diversity in Aden wetlands PAs, and establish an inventory of marine fauna and flora and indicating of threats to the biodiversity.

A survey was undertaken to establish a baseline for marine biodiversity within the Aden wetlands PAs. Survey was made in the areas between June – July 2009. the location and designation sites surveyed is as identified in (Table1). The marine areas of Aden wetlands protected areas can understandable as follow: Aden lagoons, Al Memlah Caltex-Al-Heswa and Khor Bir Ahmed.

Abundance of marine flora and fauna was estimated, using a ranked 0-6 scale, particularly for relative abundance. Scale, (Price, 1992) used for abundance estimation of flora species in m² and fauna species in whole transect with area of 100m² (100m X 1m), (Table 2).

The sites investigation were recorded by using a Garmin (*etrex*) Global Positioning Satellite (GPS).For each location core samples of sediments were taken (for worms) Infauna samples were collected at each location (8 sites), using a 15 cm by 7.5cm

Table (1): Sites of investigation in Aden wetlands PAs (June-July 2009).

Location	Coordinates		Remarks
1st Aden lagoon	N 12° 49' 054'' N 12° 49' 180''	E 45° 01' 393'' E 45° 01' 560''	Two transects on mud-rocky and in shallow water of the lagoon
2nd Aden lagoon	N 12° 50' 208'' N 12° 49' 790''	E 45° 00' 636'' E 45° 00' 100''	Transect on mud- rocks behind causeway
3rd Aden lagoon	N 12° 50' 878'' N 12° 50' 380''	E 44° 59' 626'' E 45° 00' 900''	Two transects on rocks under the bridge and rocky-mud flat
4th Aden lagoon	N12° 50' 901'' N 12° 50' 596''	E 44° 59' 403'' E 44° 59' 220''	Two Transect on mud behind the bridge and behind Al-Burehi Hospital.
Al Memlah	N 12° 51' 227''	E 44° 59' 506''	Transect on supply channel entrance
Mouth of Al Wadi Al Kabir	N 12° 51' 229'' N 12° 49' 312''	E 44° 59' 506'' E 44° 56' 096''	Two transects and observation on sandy beach
Caltex-in front of Al-Heswa PA.	N 12° 49'563'' N 12° 49'010''	E 44° 58' 244'' E 44° 56' 570''	Two transect and observation on sandy beach
Khor Bir Ahmed	N12° 49'570'' N 12° 46'510''	E 44° 58'240'' E 44° 53'950''	Two transect on rocky under the bridge and another on mud flats in front of the settlements.

Table(2): Scale of rapid assessment, used during the field survey.

Description	Abundance	Flora species in (m ²) and fauna abundance in(100m ²)
No record	NR	0
Absent	0	0
Present	+	Unquantifiable
Few	1	1-9
Some	2	10-99
Common	3	100-999
Very common	4	1000-9999
Abundant	5	10000-99999
Super abundant	6	More than 100000

diameter core. Samples were screened through a 2.00mm sieve. Selected samples were preserved in the field.

Results of data analysis for sites and species were shown in tables (3-10).photographs were taken in each site for habitats, flora, fauna and human activities.

Site visits and observation were conducted during the study period to the Aden wetlands PAs. Information has also been obtained from published and non published references and using information supplied by specialists.

Table (3): Taxa major Composition of Aden wetlands PAs.

Location	Finding
Aden lagoons	
1 st Aden lagoon	Macro algae (3),Seagrasses (3),Gastropods (3), Crustacean(3) Small fishes (+), Bivalve (+)Cnidaria (+), Polycheata (0)
2 nd Aden lagoon	Macro algae (3),Gastropods (2), Bivalves(+),Crustacean (3),small fish (+), Polycheata (0)
3 rd Aden lagoon	Macro algae (2) Seagrasses (+),Gastropods (3),Crustacean(3) ,Fish (3), bivalve (+),Cnidaria (+),Polycheata (0)
4 th Aden lagoon	Macro algae (2), Seagrasses (1),small fish(4),Gastropods (2), Bivalves (+)Cnidaria (2)
Al Memlah	
Al Memlah supply channel	Macro algae(2),small fish(4), Gastropods (2), Bivalves (+)
Caltex-Al Heswa	
Mouth of Al Wadi Al Kabir	Gastropods (3),Bivalves (3), Crustacean(3), Polycheata (0)
Caltex-in front of Al-Heswa PA	Crustacean(3), Gastropods (3),Bivalves (3), Polycheata (0)
Khor Bir Ahmed	Macro Algae (3), Seagrasses (3), Fish(4), Crustacean(4), Gastropods (3), Bivalves (3), Polycheata (0)

4. Marine Flora and Fauna

The Gulf of Aden enjoys a unique rich marine flora and fauna, due to its geographical location and other hydro meteorological conditions. Two types monsoon occur in the Gulf of Aden and these are responsible for water exchange between the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, on one side ,and with the Indian Ocean, through the Arabian Sea ,on the other. This produced conditions conducive to the formulation of high marine biodiversity in the region. Number of studies and researches were done concerning marine biodiversity in northern part of the Gulf of Aden.

4.1 Marin Flora.

The Gulf of Aden supported large areas of various types of marine flora such as sea grasses and macro algae.

4.1.1 Seagrass

Sea grasses are rooted plants found on soft substrate. The importance of the sea grasses beds is very high due to their high primary productivity. As well as providing a direct food source for a number of grazing animals and harbour juveniles of various fish species and crustaceans. Six species of sea grasses have been recorded in Gulf of Aden as follows:(Herth and others,1973, MEP1995, Wat,1996, and Bawazir, 2003).*Halodule uninervis*, *Halophila ovalis*, *Halophila stipulacea* , *Cymodocea serrulata*, *Cymodocea rotundata* and *Thalassia hembrichii*.

Seagrasses in Aden wetlands PAs were reported in (Bawazir and Abu Al Fotooh,2001) where 3 species in Khor Bir Ahmed *Halodule uninervis*, *Halophila ovalis*, *Cymodocea sp.*. (Bawazir,2003) also reported in Aden lagoons 3 species: *Halophila stipulacea*, *Halodule uninervis* and *Cymodocea serrulata*. Where *Halophila stipulacea*, where reported as a new record in the south of Arabia.



Halophila ovalis in Khor Bir Ahmed



Halophila stipulacea-Aden Lagoons

(Saad et.al.,2006,) reported *Halodule uninervis* and *Halophila ovalis* in Aden lagoons, but the second it was confused by them it is *Halophila stipulacea*.

During the field survey Seagrasses are essentially restricted to Aden lagoons, in the first lagoon(*Halodule uninervis*, *Halophila stipulacea*), and the 4th lagoon *Halophila stipulacea*. In Khor Bir Ahmed mainly found *Halodule uninervis* which covered a big area, and *Halophila ovalis* which was observed adjacent to *Halodule uninervis* or mixed in small site. Also observed few pieces of *Cymodocea serrulata* and *Cymodocea rotundata* in the Khor, but it is not clear if they are growing inside the Khor or drifted from the open sea through the bridge. This request to conduct more investigation in the future. *Halophila stipulacea* reported only in Aden lagoons (Table 4).

Table (4): Distribution of Seagrass in Aden wetlands PAs.

Species	Aden lagoons	Al Memlah Channel	Caltex-Al Heswa	Khor Bir Ahmed
Family: Potamogetonaceae				
<i>Halodule uninervis</i>	+			+
<i>Cymodocea rotundata</i> .				+
<i>Cymodocea serrulata</i>	+			+
Family: Hydrocharitaceae				
<i>Halophila stipulacea</i>	+			
<i>Halophila ovalis</i>				+

4.1.2 Macro Algae

Marine macro algae like sea grasses play an important role in the web chain and primary production in the marine live. A seasonal upwelling in the Gulf of Aden promotes the growth of macro-algae on most hard substrates. Due to high nutrient level ,algae growth is relatively abundant. 160 species of macro algae were reported in the Gulf of Aden (Ormond and Banaimoom,1994, Dou Abul and Abubakr,1996, MEP and MSRRC,1995,and Samir,et,al,1996).were dominated by Dctyota, and sargassum which relatively high abundance, Padina (brown algae), Halimeda, Udotea (green algae).

Macro algae in Aden wetlands protected areas was reported for the first time in the study of Marine biodiversity of Aden wetlands(Saad et.al,2006) were reported 13 species green and brown algae such as:

Caulerpa sp. and *Cladophora sp.* reported in all Aden wetlands, *Padina sp.* and *Turbinaria sp.* Reported in Caltex and Khor Bir Ahmed.



Caulerpa sp.

During the field survey macro algae was recorded in Aden lagoons and in Khor Bir Ahmed, green and brown algae were reported nine species where not indicted in the study of (Saad et,al,2006). They were six green algae (2 families) and three brown algae (one family), and they will be identified later on by species (Table 5).



Caulerpa sp.

Table (5): Distribution of Macro algae in Aden wetlands PAs.

Species	Aden lagoons	Al Memlah	Caltex- Al Heswa	Khor Bir Ahmed
Family: caulerpaceae				
<i>Caulerpa sp.</i>	+	+		+
<i>Caulerpa sp.</i>	+			+
.....Filamentous	+			+
.....Filamentous	+			
Family: Caldophoraceae				
<i>Caldophora sp.</i>	+			+
<i>Caldophora sp.</i>	+			+
Family: Chordariaceae				
<i>Dictyota sp.</i>	+			+
.....Brown algae	+			
.....Brown algae.	+			

4.1.3 Fishes

The Gulf of Aden is a highly productive fishery area, due to the upwelling processes and rich biodiversity which encourage a wide variety of fish ,crustaceans and several species of invertebrates.

Number of surveys and studies were carried out in the south coast of Yemen in the Gulf of Aden where identified about 600 species (MFW,2001). there are a few data available for Aden Governorate. Accordingly to (MEP and MSRRC, 1995, Samir,et.al,1996) there are about 25 families of fishes occruing in the coastal area of Aden. Among them Indian mackerel ,groupers, mullets emperor and snappers.



Fishers in Caltex-Al Heswa (Tawahe bay)

(Faisal,2005) was reported Fishes in Aden lagoons such as: Mugilidae, Platycephalidae. (Saad et,al.2006) 31 species in Aden wetlands protected areas of fish, were recorded, but didn't provid an inventory, amongst them, mullets, emperor, snappers and snub nose pompano were recorded as mostly important species. (Parsons Brinckerhoff Ltd,2008) were recorded 10 of fish species found in marine and wetland environment around Aden Causeway such as: Pinkear Emperor, Bull Cock Graunternaqem and Steaked spine foot.

During the field survey recorded were 24 species of fish from 18 families in Aden wetlands PAs. The main families were Carangidae, Laethrinidae, Sparidae and Mugilidae (Table: 6).



Crenidens crenidens



Scolopsis taeniatus

The most commonly fishing method are gill nets and hand lines where used from houris and small fiberglass, specially in Caltex-Al-Heswa (Tawahe bay).

In Khor Bir Ahmed fish are generally taken with hand lines by the local habitants in the area and gill nets by fiberglass boats by peoples form out the area. the swimming crab(*Portunus pelagicus*) is also fished in commercial quantities in Aden lagoons and Khor Bir Ahmed.

Aden lagoons and Khor Bir Ahmed are regarded as providing significant fishery nursery and spawning habitat and feeding ground for shall fish and crustaceans.

Fishing sport is common and was seen exercise specially around the bridge in Aden lagoons of the cause way, in Al Memlah Channel, and in Al Bureka bridge in Khor Bir Ahmed, using hand line.

The most commonly using of fishing method are gill nets and hand lines were used from houris and small fiberglass, specially in Caltex-Al-Heswa (Tawahe bay).

In Khor Bir Ahmed fish are generally taken with hand lines by the local habitants in the area and gill nets by fiberglass boats by peoples form out the area. the swimming crab(*Portunus pelagicus*) is also fished in commercial quantities in Aden lagoons and Khor Bir Ahmed. Shrimps and small fish fishing in Caltex-Al Heswa by using Mqdaha nets.



Fisherman in Caltex-Al Heswa –using "Mqdaha net"



Sport fishing in Aden Lagoons



Local fishers in Khor Bir Ahmed



Sepia sp.- By-catch in Aden lagoons

4.1.4 Corals

Coral and coral communities in south coast of Yemen are extensive, and wide spread, divers, and generally healthy in areas such as Khor Omera, Aden, Shuqra, Balhaf, Bir Ali and Buroom. (MEP and MSRRC,1995,Wat,1996, Kemp and Benzoni1999, Kemp and Benzoni,2000 and Yemen LNG Project,2005).

Corals in Aden were recorded in Seera, Maashiq, Ras Imran, Ras Mugalab Hadi, Ras Gold Moor, Dunafa Island (Wat,1996, Bawazir and abul Fotooh,2001).

According to (Bawazir,2006) corals in Aden due to the volcanic structure of the area, almost of the headlands and small rocky islands appear to be a largely coral and have divers coral communities, the main species were: *Porites sp.*, *Acropora sp.*, *Stylophora sp.*, *Playtgyra sp.* and *Monitpora sp.* In the investigated areas According to (Bawazir and abul Fotooh,2001) hard corals were presented as patches in Khor Bir Ahmed.

Table (6): Distribution of fish in Aden wetlands.

Species	Aden lagoons	Al Memlah	Caltex-Al Heswa	Khor Bir Ahmed	Arabic name
Family: Gerreidae <i>Gerres filamentus</i>	+				Kas
Family: Sillaginidae <i>Sillago sihama</i>	+			+	Maradees
Family: Laethrinidae <i>Lethrinus mahsena</i> <i>Lethrinus lentjan</i>	+			+	Gahsh Gahsh
Family: Nemipteridae <i>Scolopsis taeniatus</i>				+	Abu Senna
Family: Ariidae <i>Arius thalassinus</i>	+			+	Kumal
Family: Belonidae <i>Srongylura leiurua</i>	+			+	Ba Khothar
Family: Haemulidae <i>Pomadysis multimaculatum</i>	+			+	Nakem
Family: Scombridae <i>Rastrelliger kanagurta</i>				+	Bagha
Family: Carangidae <i>Carangoides fulvoguttatus</i> <i>Caranx ignobilis</i> <i>Scomberoides commersonianus</i>	+			+	Safadem Garam Helfe
Family: Sphyraenidae <i>Sphyraena jello</i>	+		+		Kod
Family: Siganidae <i>Siganus javus</i>	+			+	Zezan
Family: Mugilidae <i>Valamugil seheli</i>	+			+	Arabi
Family: Canidae <i>Chanos chanos</i>	+			+	Taliani
Family: Sparidae <i>Rhabdosargus sarba</i> <i>Crenidens crenidens</i>	+			+	Harabt Mokaresh
Family: Clupeidae <i>Sardinella sp.</i>			+		Aid
Family: Lutjanidae <i>Lutjanus russelli</i> <i>Lutjanus boher.</i>	+			+	Hobera Kalb
Family: Serranidae <i>Epinephelus tauvina</i>	+			+	Kholkhol
Family: Sciaenidae <i>Otolithes ruber</i>	+				Karat
Family: Plectorhinchus orientalis <i>Plectorhinchus gaterinus</i>				+	Karen

4.1.5 Mollusca

Available data revealed that the north part of the Gulf of Aden is rich and diverse by invertebrates. In early time reported occurrence of 729 species of mollusks from Aden inner harbour and little Aden, their were: 506 gastropods, 220 bivalves, 1 cephalopods and 2 scaphopods. According to (Wranik and Saad,1992) from the shallow water and along beaches of Aden a total of 248 species (188 gastropods, 47 bivalves and 13 Chitons) were recorded during the period 1983-1985. Some species were recorded in Aden such as Neritidae, Nasasariidae, Olividae, Strombidae, Turritellidae, Arcidae, Planaxidae, Chitons, Ostreidae, Turbinidae, Veneridae and Patellidae.

(Golden Associates Inc.,1998) had provided data on occurrence of sea shells which belong to many families in the inner harbour (Caltex causeway), such as: Veneridae, Mactridae, Tellinidae and Lunicidae. In addition they reported occurrence of snail *Volema pyrum*, *Nassarius (Plicareularia) persicus*, and also indicated for two live species of mussels *pitar sp.* and large *Amniathus umbanella* in the area of Caltex.



Murex scolopax



Tivela sp.

(Masheb and Abdurashed,2000) had provided data on occurrence of sea shells in 11 sites in the coastal area of Aden Governorate belonging many families Potamididae, Veneridae, Olividae, Arcidae, Strombidae, Melongenidae and Arcidae.

According to(Saad et.al.2006) 67 species in the Aden wetlands protected areas were reported, among them Clam Pitar were reported in Aden lagoons and Khor Bir Ahmed. The study also indicated that Khor Bir Ahmed an important area for strombid and murex snails (*Strombus tricornis* and *Chicoreus ramosus*) and Aden lagoons are important area for *Strombus tricornis*. all of them were subjected to uncontrolled exploitation. Also the *Tivela ponderosa* clam in the area of Caltex and al Heswa was reported exploitation in a heavily harvesting.

During the field survey mollusks were represented in all investigated area in large scale. Gastropoda were recorded 44 sp. and bivalve 19 sp. belonging 33 families such as

Melongenidae Cerithiidae, Neritidae, Arcidae was a common families in the investigated areas (Table7).

Some species were found alive from the families: Neritidae, Cerithidae, Melongenidae, Potamididae, Strombidae, Muricidae, Thaididae ,Arcidae, Mytilidae, Pteriidae and Veneridae.

Tibia insulaechorab curta it has been found a live in Caltex- Al Heswa and *Murex scolopax* it has been found a live in Khor Bir Ahmed.

The local people hunt the species *Strombus tricornis* and *Chicoreus ramosus* in Khor Bir Ahmed and Aden lagoons in order to obtain the operculum which is used to make a form of incense, and the others eat the meat.

4.1.6 Crustaceans

24 species of crustaceans in the Gulf of Aden, there were recorded (Abubakr,1997). (Saad et,al.2006) reported 19 species in Aden wetlands.

According to the current survey mollusks were represented in 16 species from 8 families. were for brachyuran (true crab) which represented by the families : Portunidae (*Portunus pelagicus*), Ocypodidae (*Ocypodae saratan*, *Uca sp.*), and Grapsidae crabs. False crab (Anomura) was represented by only one species of Paguridae (*Pagurus sp.*). (Table8)



Sand towers and Ghost crabs, are common on sandy beach of Caltex-Al Heswa

Fiddler crab is a common species in the intertidal muddy areas in Aden lagoons and Khor Bir Ahmed. three species have been reported.

Ghost crabs *Ocypoda saratan* are common too on sandy shores only in Caltex-Al Heswa. Local fishers observed occasionally dig deep holes to find bait. Swimming crab *Portunus pelagicus* was common in Aden lagoons and Khor Bir Ahmed where subjected from fishers. In Khor Bir Ahmed crabs reported in 14 species.

Barnacles were represented by two species *Balanus amphitrite* and *Lepas sp.*

Balanus amphitrite is common in rocky sites in Aden lagoons and Khor Bir Ahmed. and *Lepas sp.* only reported in a few numbers in Khor Bir Ahmed.

Table (7): Distribution of Mollusca in Aden wetlands PAs.

Species	Aden lagoons	Al Memlah	Caltex-Al Heswa	Khor Bir Ahmed
Polyplacophora				
<i>Acanthopleura vaillantii</i>	+			+
Gastropoda 45 sp.	29 species	4 species	10 species	16 species
Family: Fissurellidae				
<i>Diodora ruppelli</i>	+			
Family: Trochidae				
<i>Monodonta vermiculata</i>	+			
<i>Euchelus asper</i>	+			
<i>Trochus erythraeus</i>	+			
<i>Minolia sp.</i>	+			
Family: Patellidae				
<i>Cellana radiata</i>				+
Family: Neritidae				
<i>Nerita albicilla</i>	+			
<i>Nerita longii</i>	+			+
<i>Nerita palita orbignyana</i>			+	
Family: Architectonicidae				
<i>Architectonica perspeciva</i>			+	
Family: turritellacea				
<i>Turriella cochlea</i>	+			
Family: Potamididae				
<i>Terebralia palustris</i>	+			
<i>Cerithidea cingulata</i>	+			+
<i>Cerithidae cinulata</i>	+			
Family: Cerithiidae				
<i>Planaxis sulcatus</i>	+	+		
<i>Cerithium sp.</i>	+	+	+	
<i>Cerithium sp.</i>				+
Family: Strombidae				
<i>Strombus tricornis</i>	+			
<i>Tibia insulaechorab curta</i>				+
<i>Strombus sp.</i>				+
Family: Muricidae				
<i>Murex scolopax</i>			+	+
<i>Chicoreus virgineus</i>	+		+	
<i>Murex hustellum</i>	+			
Family: Melongenidae				
<i>Volema pyrum</i>	+		+	+
Family: Fascioliariidae				
<i>Fasciolaria trapezium</i>	+			
Family: Nassariidae				
<i>Nassarius arcularia plicatus</i>				
<i>Nassarius coronatus</i>			+	

<i>Bullia(bullia)semiplicata</i>				+
<i>Bullia mauritiana</i>				+
Family: Conidae				
<i>Conus terebrathomas</i>				+
Family: Terepridae				
<i>Terebra sp.</i>	+			
Family: Thaididae				
<i>Cronia konkanensis</i>	+			
<i>Thais s p.</i>	+	+		
<i>Thais savignyi.</i>	+			+
<i>Rapana bulbosa</i>	+			+
Family: Olividae				
<i>Oliva bulbosa</i>	+		+	
Family: Buccinidae				
<i>Babylonia spirata</i>				+
Family: Fasciolaridae				
<i>Fusus sp.</i>	+			
<i>Fasciolaria trapezium</i>	+			
Family: Planaxidae				
<i>Planaxis sulcatus</i>	+	+		
<i>Planaxis sp.</i>	+			
<i>naxis sp.</i>				+
Family: Bullidae				
<i>Bulla ampulla</i>			+	
Family: Naticidae				
<i>Polinices tumidus</i>				+
Bivalvia 19 sp.	11 species	1species	10 species	11species
Family: Arcidae				
<i>Anadara ehrenbergi</i>	+		+	
<i>Anadara uropmelana</i>	+			
<i>Arca zebra</i>			+	
<i>Barbatia sp.</i>				+
<i>Anadara sp.</i>	+		+	
Family: Mytilidae				
<i>Modoilus auriculatus</i>	+	+		+
Family: Pteriidae				
<i>Pinctada margaritifera</i>	+			+
<i>Pinctada radiata</i>				+
Family: Pectinidae				
<i>Chlamys lemnislata</i>			+	
Family: Pectinidae				
<i>Chlamys lemnislata</i>			+	
Family: Osteidae				
<i>Ostrea cucullata</i>	+			+
Family: Cardiidae				
<i>Trachycardium lacunosum</i>	+			+
Family: Mactridae				
<i>Mactra achatina</i>			+	+
Family: Solenidae				

<i>Solen ceylonensis</i>	+			+
Family: Cultellidae <i>Siliqua japonica</i>			+	
Family: Veneridae <i>Callista umbonella</i> <i>Tivela pondrosa</i> <i>Circenita callipyga</i> <i>Tivela sp.</i>	+		+	+
Family: Carditidae <i>Cardita sulcata</i>	+			
Family: Sepiidae <i>Sepia sp.</i>	+			+



Soldier crab is common in Khor Bir Ahmed



Charybdis natator in Khor Bir Ahmed



Fiddler crabs *Uca sp.* in Aden lagoons



Grapsus albolineatus in Aden lagoons

4.1.7 Echinoderms

The Gulf of Aden has a considerable length of coast line and possesses large area of marine habitats suitable for sea cucumber. According to (PERSGA,2009) reported that, a total of 19 of sea cucumber were recorded in the northern part of the Gulf of Aden. the occurrence of sea cucumber in the Gulf of Aden were mentioned also in ((MEP and MSRRC,1995, Wat,1996 and Samir,et,al,1996 and Bawazir,2006) were reported species

occurrence in Aden out of the PAs such as: *Halothuria atra*, *Halothuria edulis*, *Halothuria scabra* and *Actinopyga echinites*.

(Saad et.al.2006) reported in Aden wetlands the occurrence of sea cucumber were for sand fish *Halothuria scabra* and lolly fish *Halothuria atra*. Where reported in Khor Bir Ahmed in a few numbers. and also indicated to the threatened of the population.

Sea cucumber collection is more recent threats to Aden wetlands in general. were depleted in many others parts of the Yemen coastal area. During the file survey sea cucumber didn't recorded in the investigated areas.

Table (8): Distribution of crustacean in Aden wetlands PAs.

Species	Aden lagoons	Al Memlah Channel	Caltex-Heswa	Al	Khor Ahmed	Bir
Cirripedae <i>Balanus amphitrite</i> <i>Lepas sp.</i>	+		+		+	+
Family: Portunidae <i>Portunus pelagicus</i> <i>Charybdis natator</i> <i>Scylla serrata</i> <i>Thalamita admete</i>	+		+		+	+
Family: Ocypodidae <i>Ocypodae saratan</i> <i>Uca triangularis</i> <i>Uca lacteal annulipes</i> <i>Uca sp.</i> <i>Macrophthalmus sulcatus</i> <i>Dotilla myctiroides</i>	+		+		+	+
Family : Grapsidae <i>Grapsus alpolineatus</i>	+				+	
Family: Dromiidae <i>Eriphia smithi</i>					+	
Family: Sesarmidae <i>Sesarma sp.</i>					+	
Family: Pilumnidae <i>Eurycarcinus orientalis</i>					+	
Family: Paguridae <i>Pagurus sp.</i>	+		+		+	

4.1.8 Worms

(Masheb and Abdurashed,2000) provided data on occurrence species of worms in the coastal area of Aden Governorate ,but did not identified.

According to (Saad et.al.2006) 7 species of annelids worm were reported in Aden wetlands, but didn't provide an inventory of species.

During the field survey eight samples of sediments were collected as follow: four from Aden lagoons, two from Caltex- Al Heswa and two from Khor Bir Ahmed by core 7-10 cm to investigate worms, but results were negative.

During the field survey observed a tube worms and (Cnidaria) upside-down jelly fish in Aden lagoons (Table 9).

Table (9): Distribution of Tube worms and Jelly fish in Aden wetlands PAs.

Species	Aden lagoons	Al Memlah Channel	Caltex-Heswa	Al Khor Bir Ahmed
Family: Sabellidae <i>Sabellestarte sp.</i>	+			
Cnidaria				
Family: Cassiopeidae <i>Cassiopeia andromeda</i>	+			



Jelly fish up side- down -*Cassiopeia andromeda*

5. Aden wetlands PAs.

5.1 Aden lagoons

Aden lagoons are uniquely located they provide protection to birds against adverse weather and tidal changes. Adjoining intertidal areas are important for birds. The lagoons act as a nursery for juvenile fish. This in turn creates an important feeding ground for the birds.

Aden lagoons are important site for small fish were observed a numbers of small fish for the families such as: Lapridae(*Coris lfavovittata?*) and Mugilidae(*Valamogel speiclevi*) The lagoons have been subjected to filling over the years, which may affect biodiversity in the site. and subjected to oil contamination from the oil pipe line ,and also subjected from windblown domestic waste and plastic bags.

During the survey notes the pipes which feeding waters for the second lagoon from the third lagoon was begin to grow on it barnacles *Balanus amphitrite*. It means that through the time may will be blocked up and effected to the quantities of waters.

5.2 Al Memlah

Al-Memlah (Salt pans) one of the PAs of Aden wetlands. The produced sea salt from there has high quality and in those lands different naturally growing salt plants spread which tolerate high degrees of salinity and all necessary capacities exist there to produce the sea salt. Establishment this industry due to the existence of marshes and swamp lands. Where waters reaching the basins by tides due to the low surface of the Mimlah below the sea level.

Number of issues faced this area as well as neighboring fuel station and others human activities in the med of Al Memlah PA. which form a serious danger for the industrial and the biodiversity. Water birds using this area for feeding and roosting.

The old windmills used to pump the sea water in to the evaporation pans in Al Memlah PA.

Al Memlah supply channel is an important site for small fish were observed in a big number for the families: Mugilidae(*Liza sp. and Valamogel sp.*) and Jobiidae (*Boleophthalmuc sp.*)

5.3 Caltex –Al-Heswa

This area contains Al Wadi Al Kabeer outlet and Al Heswa PA from the sea side(Tawahe bay). is considered as a fishery area ,numerous of temporal hunts were evident in the site. Also boats of fishers were fishing in the adjacent areas. They fishing crustaceans, fishes and mollusks.

During the field survey persons from adjacent areas were observed, however they collect crabs(*O. saratan*) and bivalve (*Tivela pondrosa*) apparently a common activity at the site ,which were sales as a bits for fishery.

At the time of the survey birds were observed, Swift tern (*Sterna bergii*), Sooty gull (*Larus hemprichii*) and Black backed gull(*Larus fuscus*).



Bait digging for collection of crabs and bivalve takes place in Caltex-Al- Heswa (Tawahe bay)

5.4 Khor Bir Ahmed

Khor Bir Ahmed is a big mud flats as a natural refuge area for marine species, where it is possible to find different habitats that allow the growth of a rich flora and fauna. Although this Khor is located between human settlements, studies are scarce in this area. It is a reservoir of high diversity in flora as well as fauna. and considered a big marine biodiversity among the 5th PAs. Is an important site for fish, mollusks and crustaceans as breeding and spawning grounds. This in turn creates an important feeding ground for the birds.

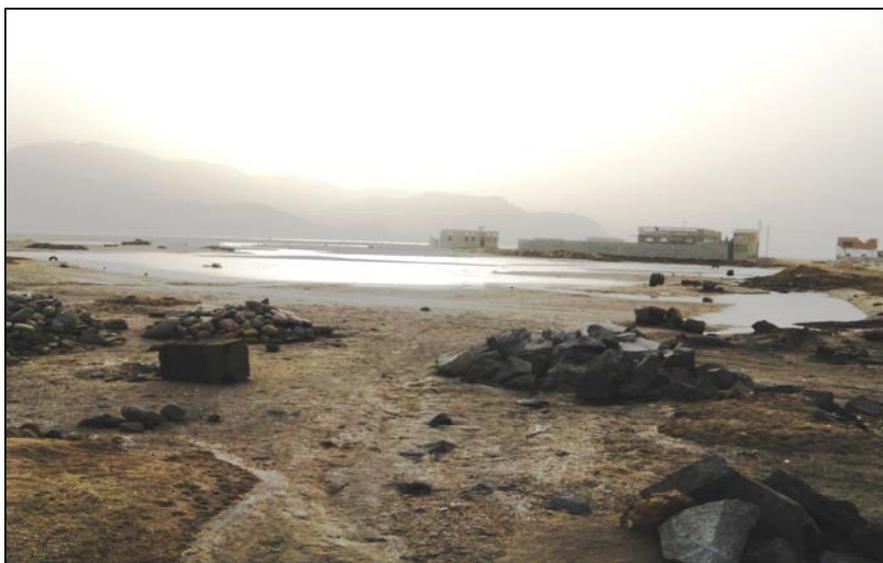
Khor Bir Ahmed was in the past an important area for sea cucumber were reported sand fish *Halothuria scabra* and lolly fish *Halothuria atra*, was targeted in a big scale in the few last years.

Local fishers reported that some times Sea turtles were seen in the site in the time of high tide (Pers. Comm.). fishing was seen in the Khor by the local habitants were using a small woody boats.

Boats of fishers take place in the Khor as a temporal anchorage, were fishing in the adjacent areas. They fishing crustaceans, fishes and mollusks.



Settlements near Khor Bir Ahmed from the west site



Illegal Expansion of settlements in Khor Bir Ahmed from the east site

Table (10): Species summary

Species	Abundance by locations			
	Aden lagoons	Al Memlah	Caltex-Al Heswa	Khor Bir Ahmed
Sea grasses				
<i>H.univervis</i>	c	nr	nr	c
<i>H. stipulacea</i>	c	nr	nr	nr
<i>H. ovalis</i>	nr	nr	nr	a
Macro algae				
<i>Caulerpa sp.</i>	c	a	nr	nr
.....Filamentous	c	nr	nr	a
<i>Caldophora sp.</i>	c	nr	nr	a
<i>Dictyota sp.</i>	nr	nr	nr	a
Chiton				
<i>Acanthopleura vaillantii</i>	c	nr	nr	c
Crustacea				
<i>Balanus amphitrite</i>	c	nr	nr	c
<i>Lepas sp</i>	nr	nr	nr	a
<i>P. pelagicus</i>	c	nr	a	c
<i>O. saratan</i>	nr	nr	c	nr
<i>Uca sp.</i>	c	nr	nr	c
<i>Dotilla myctiroides</i>	nr	nr	nr	vc
<i>Pagurus</i>	c	nr	vr	c
Tube worms				
<i>Sabellestarte sp.</i>	vr	nr	nr	nr
Jelly fish				
<i>Cassiopeia andromeda</i>	c	nr	nr	Nr

- c – Common
vc – Very common
a – Abundant
nr – Not recorded

6. Threats to biodiversity

The coast of Aden extend approximately 180 km along from the point of al Alm in the east to Ras Qawa in the west. Potential threats to Aden marine environment due to human activities seems the same impacts found in Yemeni ports cities like Mukala and Hodiedah. They identified as oil spill, dredging ,filling, eutrophication , over fishing , non planed urban development, litters and sewage discharge.

Although to advertising the five wetlands protected areas in Aden but they are facing threats by human activities.

6.1 Oil pollution

wetlands due to its surrounded by Aden Port (Tawahe bay) subjected to oil pollution due to the big activities of ships in Aden port and Aden oil refinery. Oil may leak from terminals or tankers and ballast water. Some of oil spills were occurred in Aden port.(Bawazir,2007).during the field survey was observed some of an old tar balls relatively low level were scattered along the area of Caltex- Al Heswa. layer of tar balls also were observed covered the rocks under the bridge of the causeway, and it seems as an old.



Tar balls observed in Caltex-Al Heswa beach

6.2 Sewage

Raw sewage from adjoining unplanned settlements enters the wetlands areas, destroying aquatic life which ultimately affects the livelihood of fishermen catching fish in the area. There is also an obvious health risk to people living nearby or using the wetland.

Tow of Aden wetlands are affected by sewage they are Al- Heswa and Khor Bir Ahmed PAs. In Al- Heswa, sewage is discharged directory treatment plant of Kabouta Project to the Protected area of Al Heswa to the sea. sewage treatment plant of Kabouta where do exist, it is usually poorly maintained and the volume of sewage exceeds it capacity. In Khor Bir Ahmed, sewage disposal system do not exist where seen sewage was discharged directory to the mud flats from settlements.

Sewage contains viruses and other pathogens which can causes disease. It is needed to joining Khor Bir Ahmed settlement to the sewage system in the district.

6.3 Litter

Sources of litter are mixture from land – based pollution from coastal urban communities, and water-born pollution, from vessels and boats using coastal waters. Discarded materials from the ships or from land is noticeable in the beaches of areas. Littler can affect marine species by entanglement or by ingestion. Most of the litter observed in the areas include plastic bags, bottles, glass bottles, wood and plastic sheets, old tires, nets ,batteries, ropes and an old broken shells.



Rubbish in Aden lagoons

All beaches of PAs were relatively affected by litter in large scale. In Aden lagoons specially in the first lagoon and around the edges of causeway of the 4th lagoons. Along the beach of Caltex-Al Heswa. In Khor Bir Ahmed municipal wastes were seen in the side of random houses and near the bridge of al Bureka where temporary fisherman settlement.



An old small-mesh net in Khor Bir Ahmed

6.4 Over fishing

Bottom gill net were used in a big shape and still popular in the coastal area of Yemen in general. This causes extensive damage to bottom habitat and small organisms.

Collection activities of shellfish was observed in Aden lagoons, in the first lagoon ,the targeted was Strombid gastropod (*S.tricornis*) where found quantity in a big area it is seems old.

In Caltex-Al Heswa.(Saad,et.all,2006) reported Ark shells, which was recorded alive only in this area among the shoreline of Aden. and snails in Khor Bir Ahmed

In Khor Bir Ahmed collection of shellfish covered the area behind the of fiberglass boats was found in a big scale of Muricid (*Chicoreus ramaosus*) and Strombid (*Srombus tricornis*), but appeared these quantities were brought from the out side of the Khor. But swimming crabs *P. pelagicus* were targeted in this site were collected in the past time till now in a big quantity for trades. control is un urgent need for such a kind of human activities. No more collection for sea cucumbers were seen in the area, perhaps due to the strong harvest in the past.

Very small – meshed nets(locally name Israilian nets) although they are banned in Yemen where common and popular use for fishing in all the coastal area of Yemen, because of their effectiveness at catching fish of all sizes, in particular juveniles. they are used in the coastal area of Aden in general and particularly in Aden wetlands PAs because the law is not effectively enforced.

By-catch from the use of these nets included many small fish and causes damage to the bottom habitat. If there are no juvenile fish, then there can be no larger fish to catch.

Non-sustainable gears such as bottom gill nets(local name Salaliq) , Regularly seen fishermen in Aden lagoons, Caltex Al Heswa and Khor Bir Ahmed using this gears were caused damages to the bottom habitats and fishing small fishes.



Fisher with small-mesh nets at Caltex-Al Heswa



An old *Srombus tricornis* shells in Aden lagoons

6.5. Others threats

Land filling is a clear phenomenon in the coastal area of Aden. In Aden lagoons were reclaimed about 3m in deep along of the 4th lagoons to establish clean water pipes and expansion of the marine road and bridge in Khor Maksar district and bridge of Al Bureka, all these projects did not passed to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The EPA has a clear mandate to implement the environmental legislation and conserve the natural ecosystems.but it seems all these projects were done with out EIA studies.

In Aden lagoons observed numbers of dogs in the area where may be forming a threatens to the birds.



Land fill in the entrance under the bridge in 3rd of Aden lagoons



Land fill in Aden lagoons



Land fill in the entrance under the bridge in Khor Bir Ahmed

7. Recommendation

- Increase awareness for general public and among peoples and fishers adjoining the Areas regarding the importance of Aden wetlands
- Control collecting clams in the area of Caltex –Al Heswa in addition to protect this area fully, as area of Ark shells, which was recorded alive only in this area among the shoreline of Aden. and snails in Khor Bir Ahmed.
- Banned using small-mesh nets in the water area of Aden wetlands, due to negative results for sustainable resources particular fish.
- Manage fishing activities for sustainable use.
- Conduct regularly research and scientific investigations of fauna and flora in Aden wetlands protected areas.

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