

# Al-Hima, A Way of Life A mission for Peace

ICCA Consortium Regional Assembly  
Armenia, 16 – 21 June 2019

SPNL

جمعية حماية  
الطبيعة  
في لبنان

Society for the  
Protection of  
Nature in  
Lebanon



# Who is SPNL?

- One of the first environmental NGOs in Lebanon.
- SPNL was established in 1986.
- SPNL is a national, non-geographic, non-sectorial, non-political environmental NGO
- BirdLife partner in Lebanon

## SPNL 's Mission Statement

**SPNL aims to protect nature, birds and biodiversity of Lebanon for people and to ensure sustainable use of natural resources through the Hima approach.**





# Partnerships

- SPNL is a member in IUCN, MedWet, Med NGO network, WANA Forum, and a founding member of the Lebanese Environment Forum.
- Stresses partnerships with:
  - Non-Governmental organizations.
  - Ministries.
  - Private sector.
  - Embassies & donors.
  - Municipalities-Local authorities.



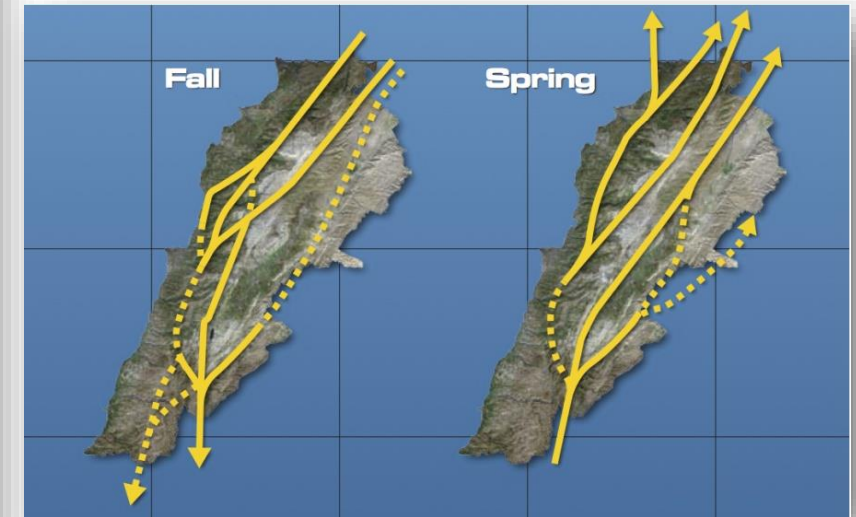
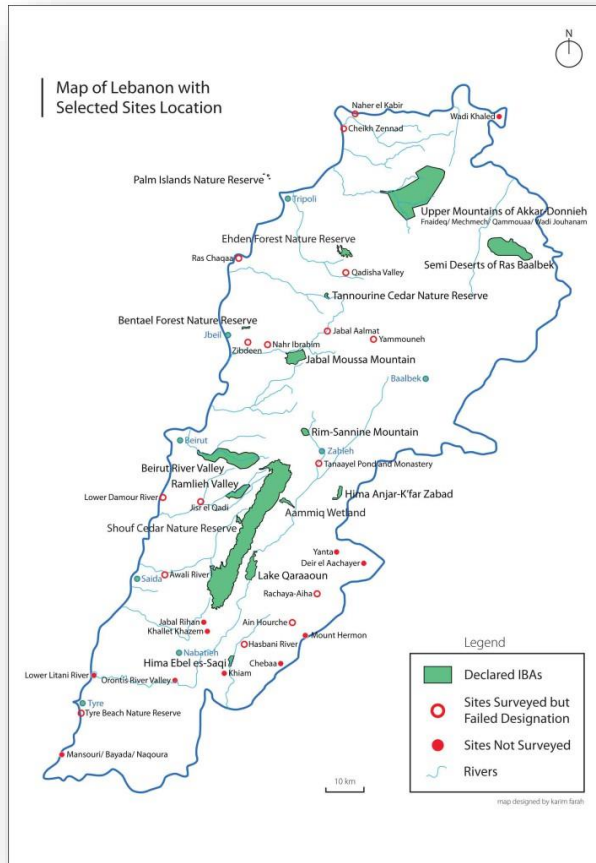


# Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBBA)

- Aim: Protect important Bird Areas through the protection of their habitats from major threats
- Three years of extensive work (1 March 2005 – 28 February 2008) to research and report important bird and biodiversity areas, 320 site visits by teams of researchers, Over 3000 hours of observations

## Results:

- **15 IBAs identified by SPNL and Arocha Lebanon & declared internationally by BirdLife International.**
- **Variety in habitats, ecosystems, biodiversity & bottlenecks for migration**

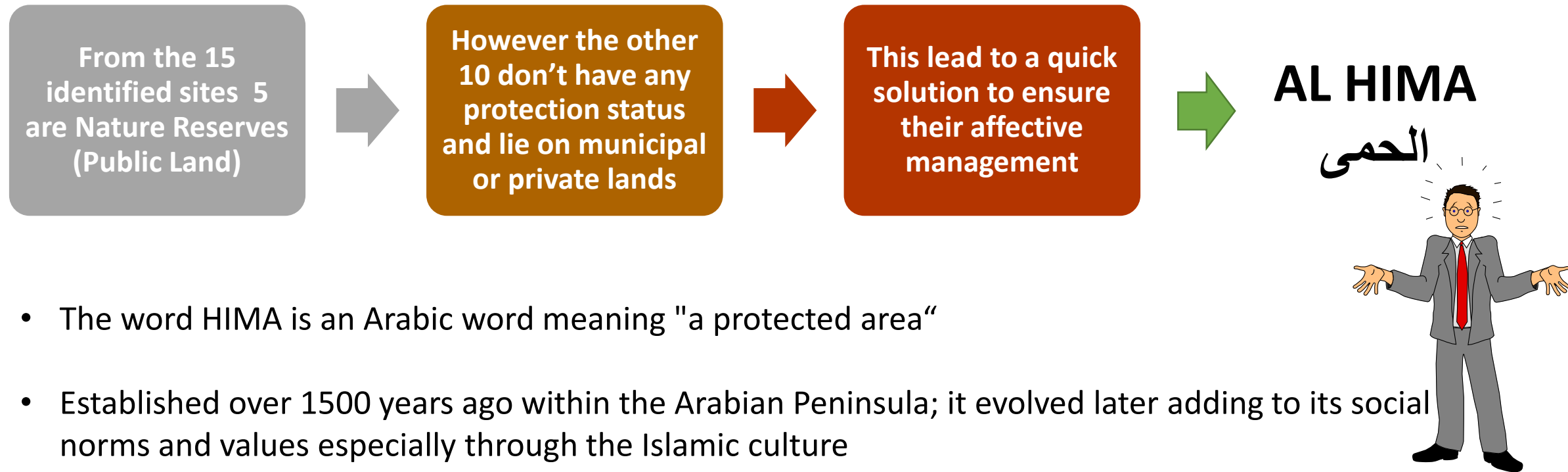








# Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBBA)



- The word HIMA is an Arabic word meaning "a protected area"
- Established over 1500 years ago within the Arabian Peninsula; it evolved later adding to its social norms and values especially through the Islamic culture
- A traditional community-based approach to sustainably manage natural resources in a way that realizes common benefits for people and Nature
- It is a traditional way to conserve biodiversity as well as natural and cultural heritage of the area

# SPNL and the Hima Revival



- SPNL revived this approach in 2004, through the support of its conservation partners Birdlife International & IUCN aiming to conserve IBAs/KBAs; merging scientific approaches with the HIMA traditional values
- SPNL merged modern science with the values of the traditional Hima to call it the ***Hybrid Hima***:
  - Using scientific assessments for the identification of sites
  - Adopting social tools for stakeholder analysis assessments
  - Adopting participatory approaches to ensure ownership by the community
  - Stressing the values & culture embedded in the traditional Hima (equity, traditional knowledge, underprivileged groups, benefits for the poor,...)



# Hima & Nature Reserve: Definition

*Although different but still complimentary*

<b>Decentralized - Hima</b>	<b>Centralized - Nature Reserve</b>
A Community based	A government based
Protected area	Protected area
Managed for the sustainability of natural resources and systems	Managed for the conservation of biodiversity, natural habitats and/or ecosystems.
And livelihood of communities depending on it.	



# Hima & Nature Reserve:

*Although different but still complimentary*

<b>Decentralized - Hima</b>	<b>Centralized - Nature Reserve</b>
Sustainable use	Strict conservation
Allows sustainable use of resources	Prohibits use of resources
Range of human activities (Fishing, grazing, habitat manipulation...) within control of carrying capacity	Mainly research and monitoring; and eco-tourism activities.
Managed by local community	Managed by government
Managed thr. Local elected committees	Managed thr. Government appointed committees
Declared by decisions from local authorities- Municipalities	Declared by government law



# Hima vs Nature Reserve:

*Although different but still complimentary*

<b>Decentralized - Hima</b>	<b>Centralized - Nature Reserve</b>
Provides benefit to local people	Limited benefit to local community
Gains support from local community	Opposition and resentment from local communities
Can reach financial satisfaction through Income-generating activities, and financial contributions from local municipalities	Financial sustainability depends on government support
Cost effective	Exhausting financial resources
Ownership & support for conservation from local communities	No direct involvement



# Hima vs Nature Reserve:

*Although different but still complimentary*

<b>Decentralized - Hima</b>	<b>Centralized - Nature Reserve</b>
Conserve Local & traditional knowledge	Promoted through eco-tourism activities
Empower local people	None
Contribute to Poverty alleviation	???
Contribute to local & regional economy	???
Sustainable Human Development	???

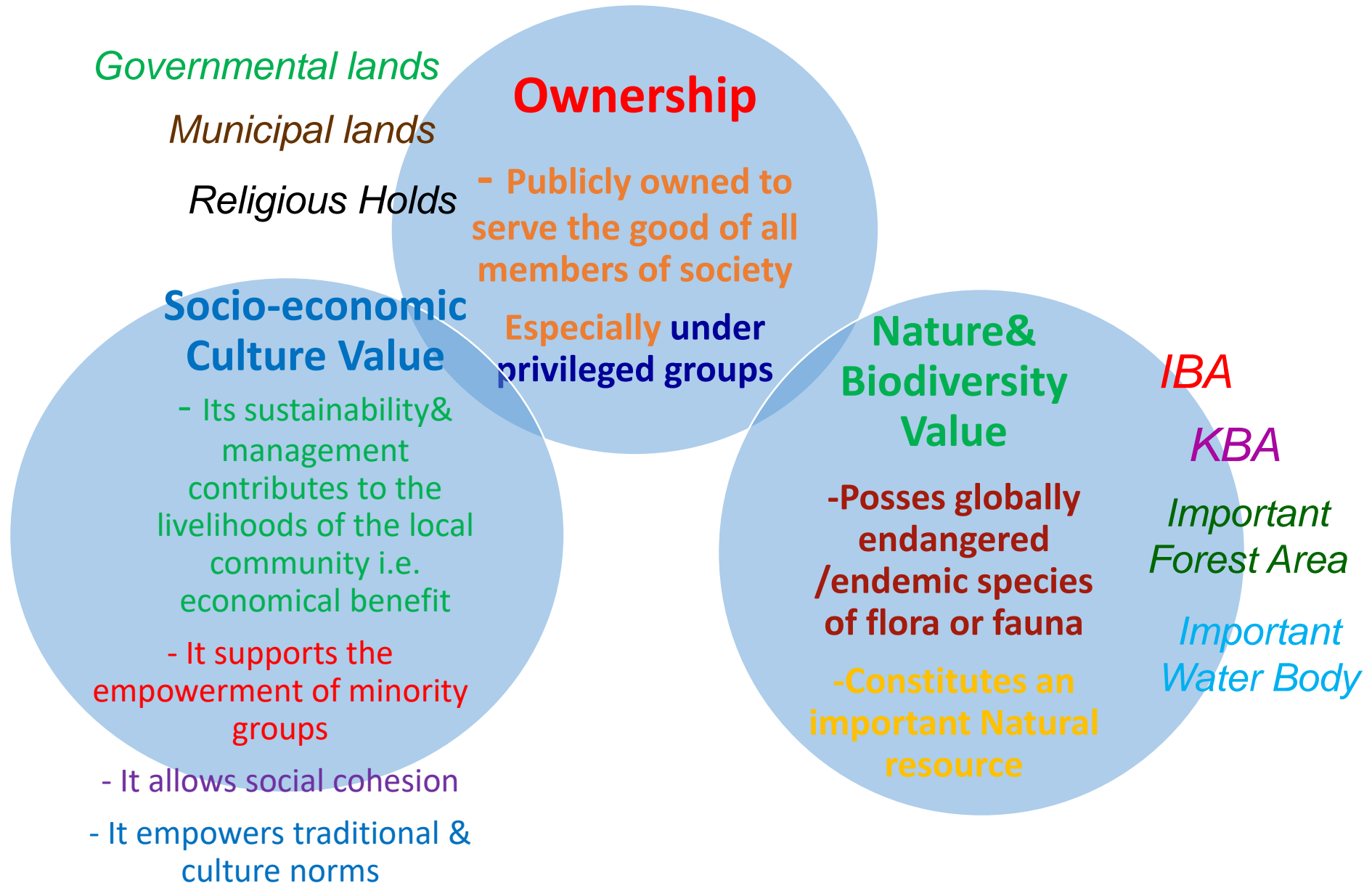
# Updates on Hima Programme in Lebanon



- Adoption of the Hima concept in the new national law for protected areas conservation (30 April 2019).



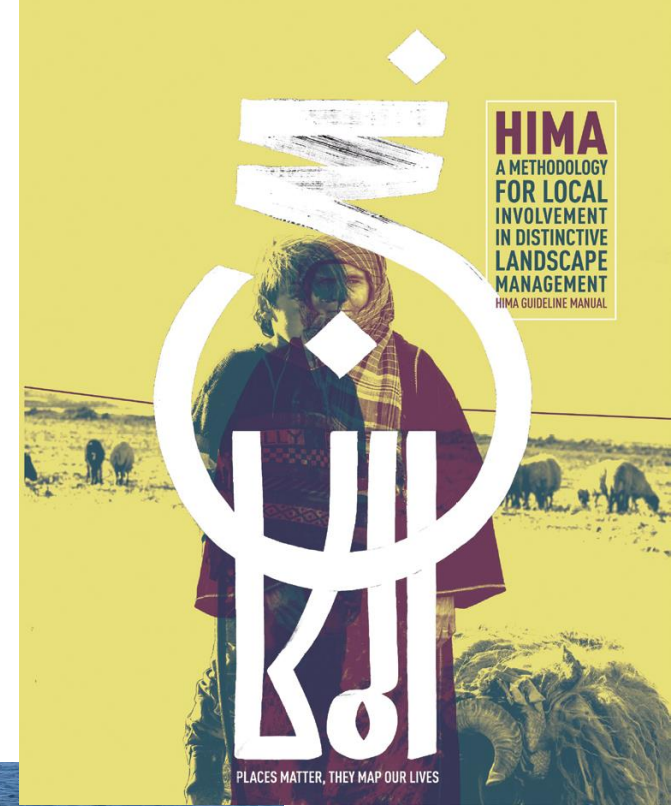
# Criteria for Selecting Hima





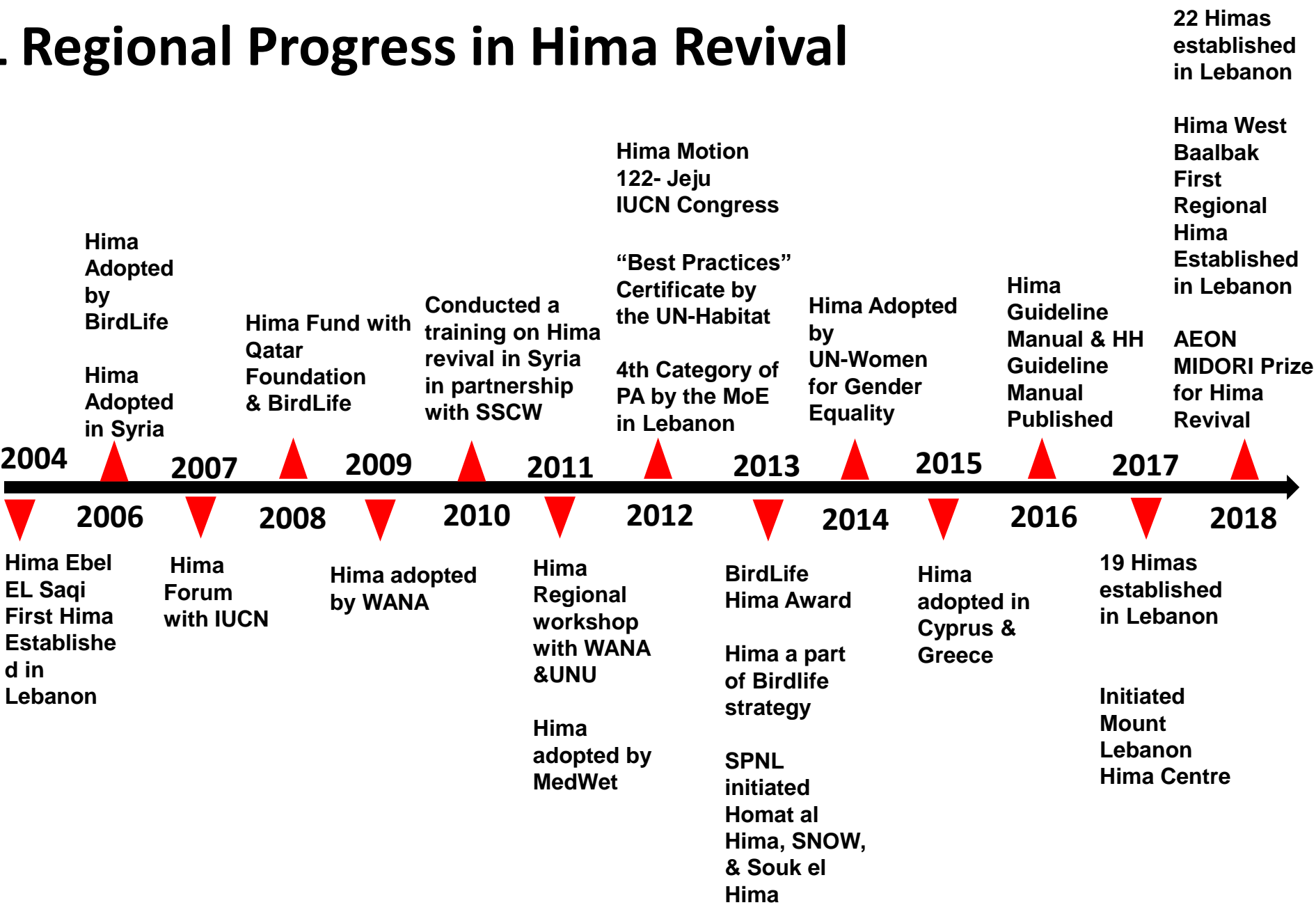
# Phases in Visioning

- It starts with the development of common view for the future.
- After analysis, a vision helps to define common goals and objectives.
- This vision will be translated into policies, legislations, and practices.





# SPNL Regional Progress in Hima Revival





# Hima Programmes

- Hima School – SNOW Programme
  - Homat Al Hima programme
  - Hima to Hima Programme
  - Souk Al Hima Programme
  - Hima Farm





# Hima School- School with No Walls

## **Aim:**

- Raise the capacities of children between the ages of 8 and 12 on the general concepts of conservation, related to biodiversity or the natural resources, to prepare them to join Homat Al Hima program at a later stage
- Provides environmental packages to all schools in the Hima sites

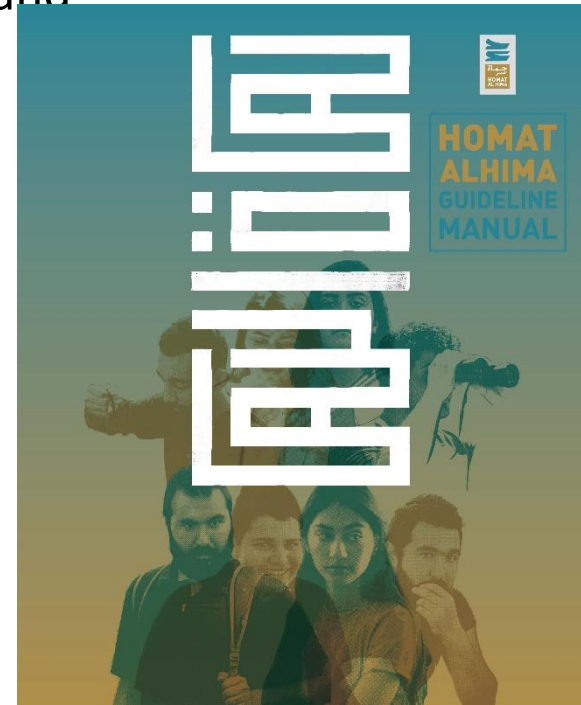
## **Packages include:**

- Interactive educational tools to be used by teachers
- Build the capacities of children while introducing them to new methods to explore their Hima heritage, appreciate its values and be dedicated to preserve it.



# Who are Homat Al Hima?

- The HIMA guardians and Heros
- Motivated, well trained and equipped youth from local HIMA communities, to lead on activities and give exposure to the HIMAs
- Work for their communities including environmental, economic and social concerns
- Assure the conservation of the site and its key biodiversity, and the ecological and cultural services it provides.



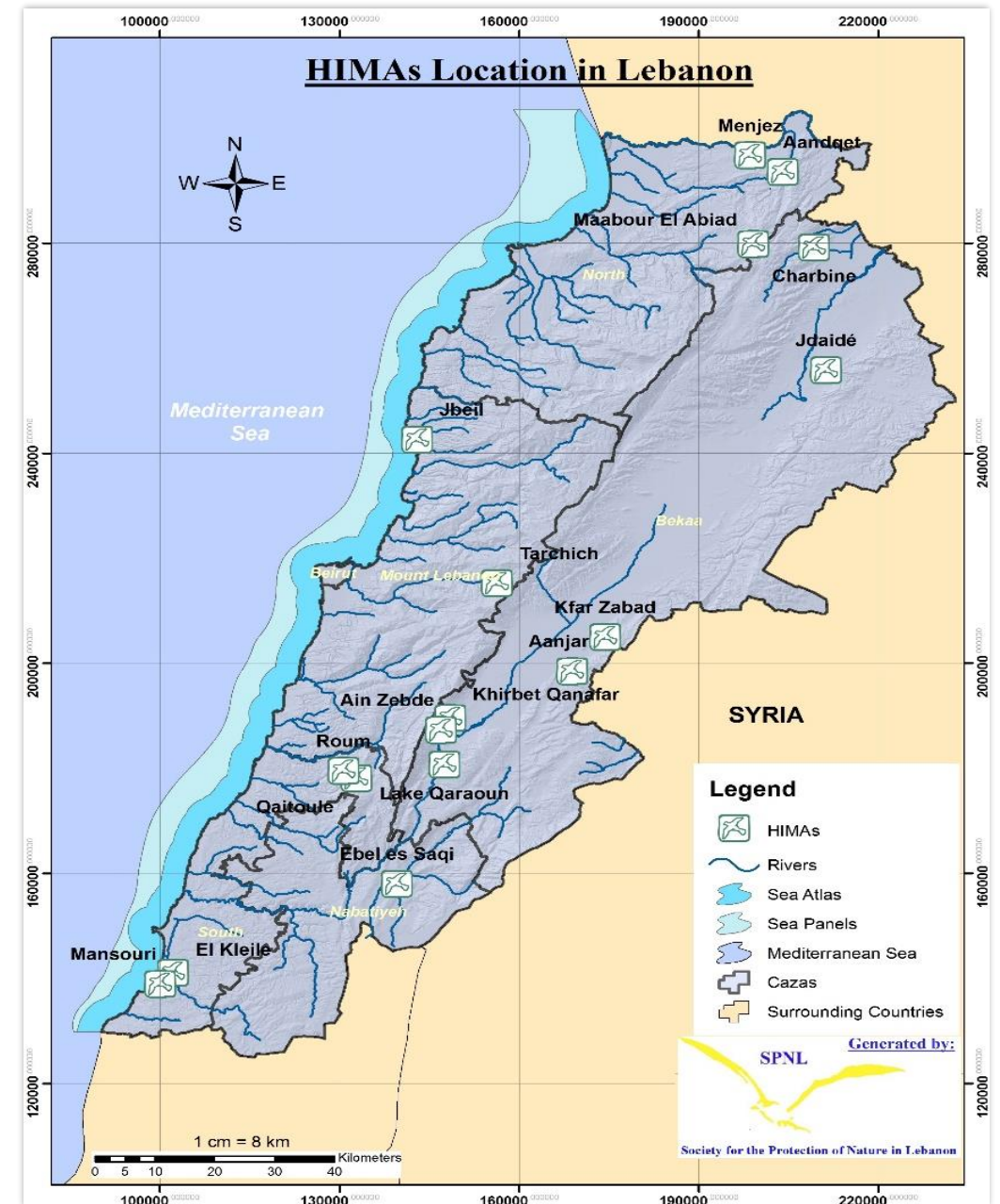


# Hima to Hima Programme

- It is an Eco-touristic model, initiated by SPNL, aiming to link the different Hima sites.
- It highlights the natural, cultural and social values embedded within the Hima areas which are managed by the local community.

## Aims at:

- **Connecting PEOPLE**
- **Connecting CULTURES**
- **Connecting MINDS**
- **Connecting SPIRITS**



# Souk Hima Programme



## Aims:

- Conserve cultural and traditional skills at local communities
- Upgrade the livelihood of rural communities within IBAs/HIMAs in Lebanon interlinked with natural resources.
- The revival of traditional and cultural hand-made products in the Hima sites
- Souk Hima arose as a marketplace (Virtual on-line ) and at HIMA Shops (دكان الحمى)
- The items hold conservation messages
- Serve the purpose of economic empowerment at local, national and international levels.





# Hima Farm

## Values & benefits:

- Organic farming, permaculture
- Sustainable use of resources
- No child labor, No hunting
- Raises capacity of locals
- Provide jobs for locals & refugees
- Conserve native plants & herbs
- Financially sustainable





A group of three people are canoeing on a calm river. In the foreground, a woman with long dark hair, wearing a white shirt and a bright yellow life vest, is actively rowing with a black paddle. Behind her, a man with dark hair and a beard, also in a white shirt and yellow life vest, is smiling and looking towards the camera. At the back of the canoe, a woman with long dark hair and glasses, wearing a yellow life vest, is holding a paddle. The canoe is white with a red stripe along the side. The river is surrounded by a dense forest of tall, thin trees, and the water reflects the surrounding greenery. In the background, another canoe with people is visible on the left side of the river.

Thank you



# Key Leadership Challenges

- Sustaining Hima approach successes at site level.
- HH network & institutional upscaling & sustainability.
- Financial sustainability & business partnerships.
- Commercialization, marketing, and communication.
- Legal institutional development.



# Biggest Successes

- Hima community based approach.
- Hima participatory framework.
- Adoption of Hima approach locally, nationally & internationally.
- Obstacles:
  - Cultural differences.
  - Legal perspective & sustainability.

# Work with other Organizations

- Partnerships, networks, coalitions,....
- Transparency, clear roles & responsibilities, mutual benefit,.....
- SPNL helped:
  - Establishing new NGOs.
  - NGOs to enter networks.
  - Establish unions or forums for collaboration.
  - Advocated for establishment of MoE.

# Key Elements in Promoting Social Cohesion

- Hima approach.
- Involvement of all stakeholders.
- Common ground for all.
- Mutual benefit.
- “Hima for Peace”

