

## The GOTHAM consortium team finally met physically during an insightful Consortium meeting in Jordan !



The project team gathered in Azraq, Jordan on October 25th and 26th 2022 in order to hold its very first physical meeting which could not take place earlier due to COVID-19 related restrictions: how great to finally meet after almost two and half years working together!

On the 25th of October, the Consortium meeting took place, it was a great opportunity for discussion and brainstorming around the project's latest advancements and future developments. The project coordinator, Damián Sanchez Garcia, CETAQUA, took the opportunity of this meeting to present and discuss the current state of development of the GTool. The GTool is an innovative groundwater governance tool, co-designed by all the water stakeholders that will allow for a new groundwater management framework.

In addition to the project partners physically present (CETAQUA, ICU, NARC, G.A.C. Group), two representatives of the Jordan Ministry of Water and Irrigation also joined the day of meeting. This led to very insightful discussions regarding the specific challenges faced by the Azraq region in terms of groundwater management.

During the afternoon, CETAQUA, ICU, NARC and G.A.C. Group, presented the results from the second co-creation workshops that took place during the summer 2022 in the three case studies. Partners discussed similarities and differences and the visualisation options chosen by each water users' groups in Jordan, Lebanon and Spain

On the second day, the project partners started their day by visiting the farm of Dr Osama Al Zyoud which relies on the production of grapes, dates and olives. His farm was a great example of innovative and sustainable farming in Azraq, by taking into consideration the groundwater-related challenges in the region. For example, Dr Al Zyoud and his team are using drip irrigation systems in order to limit their groundwater consumption. After this very interesting visit, the GOTHAM team had the opportunity to see a well and see the way that groundwater levels are monitored.

Later that day, the National Agricultural Research Center (NARC) of Jordan gathered around 15 stakeholders: high level representatives of the Jordan Ministry of Water and Irrigation, local authorities, natural reserves managers, farmers and households from Azraq region. Dr Svetlana Klessova, G.A.C. Group, led an interactive workshop with the aim to better understand the challenges related to groundwater management in Azraq and think together



about solutions beyond the use of GTool. While the GTool will be able to provide users with indicators regarding the assessment of groundwater governance, the open question is how the stakeholders intend to cooperate and to address the problematic issues together. The workshop triggered some vivid and insightful discussions among the stakeholders.



In parallel, the project's communication team, Krisztina Dax and Nina Olivier, G.A.C. Group, took the occasion of meeting the stakeholders to interview and film some of the them for upcoming videos to be shared on GOTHAM's social medias channels.

The day ended with a visit of the Azraq Wetland Reserve, a unique and precious oasis at the heart of the Jordanian eastern desert. This site has been established in the late 70s by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature and is today still a location of rich biodiversity.

A warm thank you to Dr Luna Al-Hadidi, NARC and her team from the very warm welcome in Azraq! The project team will gather again later in November in Lebanon in order to visit the case study site. Stay tuned!



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