Executive Activities Report

Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project

- 2026 Mid-year -

Rainfall and the revival of wetlands during the first half of 2026 have brought renewed hope for a new chapter in the country's water resources management. Yet the sustainability of these positive developments depends on sound management and sustained action. Against this backdrop, the Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project has continued to advance its work through practical, field-oriented approaches. Below is an overview of the project's key achievements and activities during the first six months of 2026.

World Wetlands Day ceremony

In February 2026, the World Wetlands Day ceremony was held under the theme " Wetlands and Traditional Knowledge: Celebrating Cultural Heritage", bringing together senior national officials and representatives of international organizations at the conference hall of the Department of Environment. The event highlighted the importance of integrating indigenous knowledge with modern technologies to strengthen wetland resilience. Discussions focused on practical measures including the formal registration of wetland documentation, the adoption of smart monitoring systems, and enhanced cross-sectoral coordination. The ceremony concluded with recognition of outstanding achievements in wetland conservation and the unveiling of newly published research and technical resources.

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Exhibition of Local Livelihood groups' products at the World Wetlands Day Celebration

Alongside the World Wetlands Day celebration, an exhibition showcasing products made by local communities from the five pilot provinces of the project attracted significant interest from participants. The exhibition's success in sales and marketing demonstrated that these livelihood groups are ready to expand their activities. Supporting such initiatives remains a key strategy for diversifying water-compatible livelihoods and reducing pressure on wetland ecosystems.

Project Activities in Sustainable Agriculture

During the first half of 2026, the Sustainable Agriculture Implementation Project successfully solidified the institutionalization of innovative approaches within local communities. This achievement, the result of continuous fieldwork initiated in September 2025, has now come to fruition across 51 pilot villages spanning 14 districts within the project's five pilot provinces.
As of the end of June 2026, more than 765 farmers, covering 689.8 hectares of agricultural land, have been directly trained by the project. These successful interventions have encompassed a wide range of crops, including wheat, rice, apples, grapes, and dates, demonstrating strong adoption by beneficiaries and the strengthening of local capacities. This success has established a robust foundation for the development of sustainable farm management and the enhancement of agricultural resilience across other regions of the country.

Project Activities in the Field of Water-Resilient Livelihoods

Building on the implementation of programs to diversify livelihoods compatible with wetland resources, and following the identification of volunteers in the pilot villages, numerous livelihood groups have been established in the target areas in collaboration with local facilitators. These include 45 groups across 9 villages bordering Lake Urmia in East Azerbaijan, 41 groups in 12 villages of West Azerbaijan, 21 groups in 6 villages surrounding the Anzali Wetland, 70 groups in 6 villages near Lake Parishan, and 51 groups in 6 villages near the Shadegan Wetland.

Capacity Building for Local Communities in Processing, Packaging, and Marketing

During this period, consultants specializing in 'processing and packaging' and 'marketing and sales' visited the 51 pilot villages across the five selected provinces. They assessed the status of agricultural production, processing, and distribution, while identifying the prevailing market patterns and product value chains. Concurrently, through specialized capacity-building workshops, the knowledge and skills of local facilitators in marketing and market development were enhanced.
The results of these initiatives have provided a more precise understanding of market opportunities and challenges, strengthened local capacities, and established a foundation for designing targeted interventions within the value chain development sector. This achievement paves a new path for increasing the added value of products, improving producers' market access, and ensuring the sustainable development of project activities across the pilot villages in all five provinces.

Evaluating Project Effectivenes

In the first half of 2026, the project established a robust infrastructure for monitoring water and chemical input usage across pilot farms and orchards. Within each of the 51 target villages, three farms or orchards were selected and equipped as dedicated monitoring units. Parallel to this, 48 person-days of specialized water management training were conducted for experts, in collaboration with agricultural technical-engineering institutes and provincial agricultural research centers. These initiatives have laid the groundwork for a data-driven monitoring system, enabling more precise evaluation of project effectiveness and informed decision-making in agricultural water management. Ultimately, these steps have strengthened the pathway for implementing water-productivity solutions across all pilot villages.

Other Project Updates

Continuing efforts toward inter-sectoral cooperation in sustainable agriculture, a joint meeting was held between the Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project and the Organization for Agricultural Research, Education, and Extension (AREEO). The session focused on identifying synergies to integrate sustainable agriculture achievements into the "National Model Farm Network."
Furthermore, in the first half of 2026, to advance sustainable development goals and boost agricultural productivity, the "Sustainable Rice Cultivation Program Document Matrix (PDM)" was finalized in Gilan Province. This strategic framework is expected to strengthen sustainable management models, increase productivity, and facilitate the scaling of successful practices across other regions of the country.
To complement these technical advancements, the project also focused on capacity building and sales training for livelihood groups to ensure the long-term economic resilience of local communities. As part of this initiative, three provincial exhibitions showcasing local products were held in Fars, Gilan, and West Azerbaijan. Additionally, in partnership with the Technical and Vocational Training Organization (TVTO), vocational training cycles have commenced, with nearly 2,500 candidates identified and nominated by the project to participate in these specialized programs.