



# MOROCCO

**Long-term accompaniment and anticipation of climate change in the Souss Massa Drâa region of Morocco (for urban/coastal sectors (Agadir), agricultural sectors of the Souss Plain and rural sectors of the Anti-Atlas)**

**Project presented** by the Souss Massa Drâa Regional Council.

## → Context and strategy

The Souss Massa Drâa region is one of the most important areas in Morocco. The region's agricultural, tourist and economic potential could provide a new growth impulse that would be able to overcome current challenges and constraints. One of these major constraints, which is a limiting factor is the availability of water. The balance between water resources and demand remains precarious and very fragile in this region and has been further weakened by the increasing severity of droughts since 1970's. In the Souss Massa Drâa region, water is an essential factor for development, in particular in the Oued Souss Valley, a major agricultural producer. Nonetheless, the Souss water table is overly exploited, while the entire region, including the cities of Agadir and Ouarzazate, risks sudden and violent flooding. In association with the Souss Massa and Drâa Hydraulic Basin Agency (ABHSMD), the Souss Massa Drâa Regional Council (CRSMD) has committed to a policy of water resource development and water savings, in particular by modernization of irrigation in the Souss Plain and the use of reservoir water. A Framework Agreement was signed in May 2008 between the Souss Massa Draâ Regional Council, the Hérault General Council, the Souss Massa Hydraulic Basin Agency and the Rhône-Mediterranean and Corsica Water Agency.

## → Budget

Estimation: 3.5 million euros, divided among: Souss Massa Drâa Region and Moroccan partners (30 to 50%), French partners (50 to 70%).

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## → Project

The project aims to preserve water resources for current populations and their activities and to guarantee development conditions in the Souss Massa Drâa region for future generations. It reinforces a policy designed to stop the exodus from rural mountain areas; this policy focuses on the improvement of everyday life for inhabitants (alphabeticization of women, education of children, etc.) through a supply of clean water and the construction of sanitation systems, as well as through the development of irrigation, the creation of local product cooperatives, development of the argan-tree forest and tourism.

## → Implementation

The project, which covers a broad geographical area, will focus on various implementations. The idea is to support the elaboration and implementation of a Water Table Contract and to promote agricultural production tied to rational water management by improved use of the biological fertility of the soil.

A coordinated management process of the SAGE (Guiding Framework for Water Management and Planning) type will be implemented, including an integrated management approach with clean water supply for the commune's four douars (tent villages), protection of water resources, sanitation, management of flood risk, and consideration of the agricultural aspects associated to an evolution in irrigation technologies and to their means of commercialization. The project will also cover the implementation of a cooperative "rainmaking" action (using cloud-seeding techniques that aim to modify cloud structure and provoke rain).

## → Expected results

- » Water savings and improvement in the use of irrigation water, mobilization of surface water, development and mobilization of underground water;
- » Scientific research: synergy between research workers and water professionals acquired on pilot sites, initiation of training programs;
- » Governance, quantitative and qualitative tracking of water resources, progress indicators;
- » Modernization of irrigation systems, new ways of planting, generation of market economy.

## → Partners

Moroccan partners: Souss Massa Draâ Regional Council, Agrotech (applied research organism, partner of the Regional Council), Souss Massa and Drâa Hydraulic Basin Agency, National Weather Department.

French partners: Hérault General Council, Aquitaine Regional Council, Rhône-Mediterranean and Corsica Water Agency, Mixed Syndicate of the Astien Water Table, Verseau Development, pS-Eau, Valorhiz, Aquitaine Fruit and Vegetable Cooperative, Dordogne and Hérault Chambers of Agriculture, Mid-Garonne and Southwest Climatological Association/Agralis, Hérault Climatological Association.

International partner: Latin Arc Association.