

# PRESS RELEASE

**United Nations Development Programme  
Damascus, Syria**

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## Al Ghab Development Programme is Signed

DAMASCUS, 3 February 2010 - A project aimed at up scaling the developing process of the "Al-Ghab" region has been signed at the State Planning Commission as a joint collaboration between the State Planning Commission (SPC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Food and Agriculture organization (FAO).

The purpose of this project is to enhance the current efforts that are in place to improve the living standards of the citizens of the Al-Ghab region. The focus of this project is to create investment opportunities and develop policy and legal frameworks to support the agriculture, agro-industry, local tourism, housing, water resource management, and the ability to implement sustainable and environmentally sound development projects'.

Located in the governorate of Hama, Al-Ghab is a highly populated region with more than 300,000 people living in 134 villages spreading over more than 140,799 hectares of land. Approximately 62% of this land is made up of fertile agricultural soils, 26.2 % forests in addition to 9.6 % of non-arable land and 2.3 % of grass-plains and pastures. The region has a high development potential due to the abundant natural resources and favorable rainfall and water resources. The region also enjoyed uncontaminated air quality in addition to impressive landscapes that have a touristic potential.

Signatories of the project document include: H.E. Amer Husni Lutfi Head of State Planning Commission, Mohamed Hassan Mansour (Director of General Commission for Management and Development of Al Ghab, and Ismail Ould Cheihk Ahmed United Nations Resident Coordinator.

The duration of the project will be 15 months with a Total budget is US\$ 1.717,468

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