

Initiative Towards a Green Visitors Center



Green Economy Division

2017

Introduction

The protected area of the Aqaba Marine Park was established and funded by the World Bank in 1999 to conserve and manage the natural near-shore marine environment of the Aqaba south coast region with its rich biodiversity, while allowing for certain touristic uses at sustainable levels, for the benefit and enjoyment of the present and future generations of Jordanians and the global community.

The park's visitor center is the corner stone of the park's many facilities and was established to house the park's administration and to be the focal point of the park's public environmental education and outreach programs. Environmental awareness activities such as lectures, audio-visual shows and interactive exhibits are part of the park's efforts to raise awareness of the marine environment and its' habitats and the need to protect and conserve them.

Objective

To replace the current electricity source in the visitors center to solar power, through utilizing the parking areas available (Figure 1). Subsequently, complete the transformation of the Marine Park into an integrated environmental facility in terms of preserving the elements of the environment and providing environmentally friendly energy systems.



Figure 1: Parking Lots

Location

The Aqaba Marine Park is located south of the city of Aqaba. The park is about 7 km in length, stretching from the Passenger Terminal in the North to the Police Officers' Club in the South. The visitor's center is 625 m in length located within the Aqaba Marine Park (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Marine park map

Facilities and Activities

1. A multi-purpose auditorium.
2. The park management's offices.
3. The park rangers' diving unit.
4. Park ranger accommodations.
5. 3 Exhibition halls.
6. A gift shop.
7. A reception area.
8. A restaurant.
9. An out-door amphitheatre.
10. Storage facilities.

11. Playground area for children
12. Sports fields area:
 - Beach volleyball court
 - Beach football court

Below are some pictures for the Visitors center facilities.



Figure 3: Visitors Center Facilities

Current Situation

- All of the visitors center facilities runs on one energy meter.
- The total electricity consumption of the visitors center for the year 2015 was approximately 170,000 kw (just about 42,000 JD)
- The visitors center is lightened at night by two floodlights (Figure 4)

- A one dunum area of solar panels is needed to cover the above consumption.
- The area of the parking lots is 2400 m²

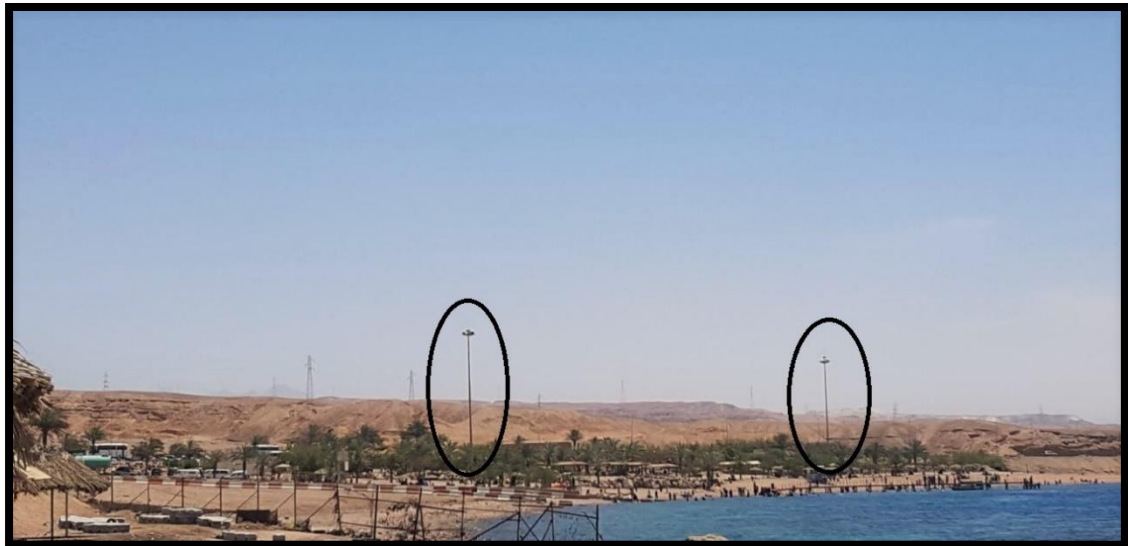


Figure 4: Floodlights at the Visitors Center

Expected Outputs

- A contribution in the Jordanian target of 20% renewable energy in the overall energy mix by 2020.
- A regional showcase of an integrated environmental facility in terms of energy and environmental elements.
- Conserve energy consumption.
- Raise awareness of energy savings potential among commercial/ household consumers.

The roughly estimated budget of this project is 125,000JD including all installation and administration costs.