

New series: Past Technical Assistance for the Gulf States and Future Challenges

Part 1: Technical assistance to the Gulf States in the fields of greening and agriculture

Since 1976, AAI has been both directly and indirectly involved in technical cooperation projects related to arid zone agriculture and in the greening of deserts in Gulf States such as UAE and Oman. AAI staff participated directly as JICA experts in experimental farm projects using asphalt moisture barrier, and in the joint research project conducted by Shizuoka University and UAE University. We have also had chances to conduct fact finding visits to projects such as JICA's aquaculture project, the sandponics model farm project set up by Kashima Oil Company Ltd. and the afforestation site run by Taiki Corporation. In 1985, we took part in the landscaping and greening project in the suburbs of Dubai. In this project, AAI planned, designed and established tree nurseries and worked on seedling production. In addition, AAI managed the project itself, being in charge of logistical and personnel administration. Starting 1996, a long-term JICA expert seconded by AAI has been working in Salalah, Oman, offering technical cooperation such as guidance to local technicians on crop production. These activities are summarised in the table below.

Project Name	A i m s	Execution period	Executing bodies	Local Counterpart
Experimental Station Desert Development Institute, Japan	Application test of desert greening devices, in particular, crop field experiments on effects of asphalt moisture barrier	1976-1980	DDIJ	Department of Agriculture, Abu Dhabi
Aquaculture Project	Technical cooperation regarding development and dissemination of aquaculture technologies at the Marine Resources Development Center	1980-1999	JICA	Ministry of Agriculture, UAE
Kashima-Abu Dhabi Farm	Establishment, operation and management of a commercial model farm using sandponics	1980-1990	Kashima Oil Company Ltd.	Department of Agriculture, Abu Dhabi
Afforestation Project	Afforestation project within the framework of the government's desert greening program	1980-1990	Taiki Corporation	Department of Forestry, Abu Dhabi
Landscaping and Desert Greening Project	Afforestation project within the framework of the government's desert greening program	1985-	AAI Company Ltd.	Water Department, Dubai
Joint Study Project on Improvement of Arid Land Agriculture	Basic research into sand dune fixation, water saving, and increasing crop production with saline water irrigation	1985-1998	JICA / Faculty of Agriculture, Shizuoka University	UAE University
Nejd Agricultural Research Station	Guidance and advice on crop production in arid regions at the Nejd Agricultural Research Station	1996-	JICA	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Oman

In Japan, AAI participated as a member of the advisory board at the Symposium on the Greening of the G.C.C. Countries that was held in autumn 1992. We were able to hear reports on greening efforts conducted in the Gulf nations, and also the Symposium offered a precious opportunity to examine, with the participants from the gulf states, the future prospects of an extremely wide range of fields including greening technologies and water supply technologies

In this new series, we would like to discuss the ideal technical cooperation in the Gulf States based on our long experience. For this, we will focus on some projects conducted in UAE. We will analyze and evaluate how the projects started, how they were executed, and how they have fared after being transferred to the local authorities concerned. Moreover, we would like to examine ideal methods of technical cooperation in this area, making comparisons with assistance programs implemented by western and international organisations. Given the fact that the Gulf states are increasingly being removed from the list of nations targeted for assistance, this may be the time to consider how future activities in the region should be conducted