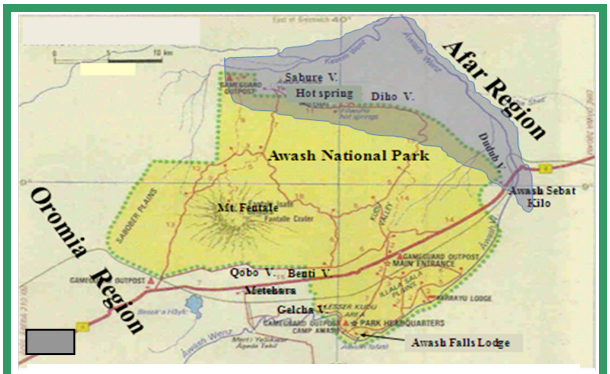
Dir Biyabir Quarterly Update

2nd Quarter 2013

www.dirbiyabir.org June 01, 2013

Dear Members

We are excited to announce a new partnership with an Ethiopian NGO, Wildlife for Sustainable Development (WSD). The organization works in and around Awash National Park to conserve biodiversity by promoting sustainable utilization of wildlife and their habitat. The Executive Director of WSD, Dr. Yirmed, is a zoologist who has worked in conservation in Ethiopia for over 20 years including as Park Warden of Mago National Park & Ecologist at Nech Sar National Park



Project area in near Awash National Park

Doum palm forest in Awash National Park

Dir Biyabir funds the Development of Marketable Doum Palm Handicrafts by Afar Women Groups around Awash National Park

The Afar people are pastoralists who live in the Afar region. They usually seek out alternative income sources when livestock productivity is low. With this in mind, a project proposal for the development of marketable Doum Palm handicrafts by Afar women was submitted by WSD on March 31, 2013. WSD collaborated with volunteers from the Ethiopian Diaspora to develop a detailed proposal.

This project will examine the diversity of use of the palm leaves among the Afar ethnic communities with the following objectives:

- To document the uses of leaves for both domestic and commercial needs.
- To assess the availability of palm leaves for the various needs.
- To provide training for women in order to enhance their capability to produce handicrafts.
- Develop traditional conservation practices thus maximizing benefits generated from Doum Palm (Hyphaene thebaica) products,

For the project, ten craftswomen will be identified from the villages of Deho and Dudub who are motivated and equipped to run a small business for income generation. The goal is to provide training in standardization of techniques, product development, administration and business skills, financial and planning aspects, and the development of new markets in an environmentally sensitive manner.

Expected results:

- Improved integration of traditional knowledge in the daily life of the indigenous communities through preservation of culture and tradition.
- Reduction in poverty of village populations through new income generation for several families.
- Increased level of integration in the market economy.
- Sustainable use of Doum Palm vegetation ensured.

After careful review of the proposed project and many detailed questions which WSD addressed thoroughly Dir Biyabir signed a Memorandum of Understanding with WSD and $2,351USD was wired to WSD in April 30, 2013.

We are excited about this new project and will keep you informed about the progress. For more information on WSD please visit *WW.WSD.ORG.ET.*