

Mesopotamian Marshlands Restoration — Ahwar of Southern Iraq

PES & Nature-Based Solutions · Good practice · Iraq

Quality score: 40/100

Evidence strength: Moderate

Summary

Since 2003, Iraq's Ministry of Water Resources and NGO Nature Iraq have re-flooded the Mesopotamian Marshlands, reaching 75% of historic extent at peak and enabling ~250,000 Marsh Arabs to return — but upstream damming and drought have since cut coverage below 10% in dry years.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Carbon — sequestration / storage, evidenced	0/3
Biodiversity — conservation / improvement, evidenced	2/3
Water & soil — retention, infiltration, erosion control	3/3
Fire resilience — risk reduction, evidenced	0/3
Governance, certification & transferability	1/3

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

[C-NAPSE web research](#) — accessed 2026-07-16

[Iraqi Ministry of Water Resources \(Centre for Restoration of Iraqi Marshlands and Wetlands\) with Nature Iraq and UNEP](#) — accessed 2026-07-16

[UN Iraq — Mesopotamian Marshes World Heritage on the Brink](#) — accessed 2026-07-16

[Peer-reviewed hydrology study \(PMC\)](#) — accessed 2026-07-16

[Wetlands International case study](#) — accessed 2026-07-16

[Al-Monitor: Iraq's historic marshes revive as water returns \(2026\)](#) — accessed 2026-07-16

[Yale e360: Iraq's marshes and climate-driven drought](#) — accessed 2026-07-16

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