



2012 - 2013

Model Arab League

BACKGROUND GUIDE

Council of Environmental Affairs Ministers

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National
Council
on US-
Arab
Relations



Esteemed Delegates,

Welcome to the 2012-2013 session of University Model Arab League's Council of Environmental Affairs Ministers. My name is Sandor Hopkins and I look forward to making this year's session a memorable and exciting one in partnership with all of the ecologically-minded delegates out there. I am a senior at Montana State University in Bozeman's Political Science department, with a focus on International Relations, and specifically my passion, the Middle East. This upcoming session will be my second in MAL and my first as a formal Chairman.

The 21st century is one that has been marked by an increased awareness of the impacts that human development and activities have had on our planet's delicate ecosystem. As the global population rises and natural resources are depleted to the point of scarcity, it is imperative that our society, from the individual to the state, tackle these issues before they spiral out of control. This issue is of keen interest to members of the Arab League for a number of reasons. First the delicate environment of the Middle East is one that is readily influenced by climate change, leading to issues such as desertification and competition over arable land and potable water. This competition places a strain on existing resources and leads to problems such as the decimation of aquatic populations through over-fishing, the capture and illegal trade of exotic animals as a profession in lieu of other business opportunities.

Second, improper stewardship and lax industrial regulations lead to the destruction of the ecosystems necessary for these sensitive flora and fauna to flourish. As firms develop new ways to maximize the yield of resources like hydrocarbons and precious metals, the environmental impact of these practices must be gauged and restricted where necessary for the benefit of the ecosystem's health and wellness, and consequently, that of our own health and well-being.

We live in a rapidly globalizing world and if we do not care for our planet we will see it slowly destroyed before us. We all have the potential to make a change for the better, whether it's by reducing demand for fossil fuels, or simply treating all living things as we wish to be treated. Future possibilities are endless, but only if we act now to secure our global ecosystem and create a world that we can be proud to pass down to our successors. Education is naturally the first step, but education is nothing without action.

I am very excited to be a part of this program and the opportunity to work with everyone to help find new, creative, and sustainable paths to economic and environmental development. As always, compromise is the name of the game, and I want to encourage anyone reading this to keep an open mind and to always be looking for new and better ways to improve not just our own quality of life, but that of every living being on this planet.

I hope this guide is a helpful starting place and I look forward to meeting you in DC!

Best of Luck!

Sandor Hopkins

Topic 1: Developing sustainable fishing policies and trade regulations in order to protect fish populations and ecosystems and to promote regional food security.

I. Introduction to Topic

A. General Background

For an organization located in the heart of the ancient maritime world, fishing has long been a source of commerce and food for the people of the Arab League. However, the nature of modern fishing industries has created an unsustainable pattern of over-fishing and exhausted the oceans' supplies in some areas. For example, the Environmental Defense Fund estimates that 90% of the world's large fish populations like tuna and swordfish have been removed from the oceans, and that 87% of global fisheries are fully exploited or overexploited.¹ In a world where shellfish supply basic animal protein to 1 billion people annually and sustainable fishing could lead to increased food security in some of the world's poorest areas, it is imperative that steps be taken to address this issue in a timely and productive manner.²

In Africa, the productivity of coastal waters has dropped dramatically as the population of the continent grows.³ While the African Union has taken steps to protect its coasts, the efforts are underfunded and undercut by European, Russian, and Chinese fishing fleets striving to meet a rising global demand.⁴ Numbers for how much is paid into fishing licenses, or how much is caught, are dubious at best, with many countries underreporting, or simply choosing not to report the relevant data.⁵ The impact of this cannot be understated; in Kenya, fishermen catch an average of 3 Kg of lobster on a trip, almost 10 percent of the average 28 Kg haul in the 1980's.⁶

B. History of Topic in the Arab World

Traditional sailboat fishing vessels, Dhows, have been a part of the maritime culture of the Arab nation for some time. Dhows, however, are labor-intensive and the amount of work required is conducive to sustenance fishing rather than industrial for-profit fishing operations. Many dhows are still in operation through the Mediterranean and Red Seas, as well as the Arab Gulf. [CITE] [The issue has been the rise of industrial fishing operations, the impacts of which have been seen most drastically in Somali waters.] Somalia's piracy problem partially finds its roots in the abuse of their maritime resources, such as dumping of industrial waste and illegal fishing operations plundering the necessary food source.⁷

In the UAE, fishing has been an integral part of the way of life. Due to the scarcity of water

¹ "By the numbers: Oceans in crisis." Environmental Defense Fund. http://www.edf.org/oceans/numbers-oceans-crisis?s_src=ggad_overfishing&gclid=CPr00vStsLICFUjhQgodv0IAnQ

² Ibid

³ "Africa's Oceans: A sea of riches." The Economist. Feb 18, 2012. <http://www.economist.com/node/21547867>

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Curnow, Robyn. "Is Illegal Fishing to Blame for Somali Pirates? â" Business 360 - CNN.com Blogs." *Is Illegal Fishing to Blame for Somali Pirates? â" Business 360*. N.p., 25 Aug. 2011. Web. 15 Oct. 2012. <<http://business.blogs.cnn.com/2011/08/25/illegal-fishing-somali-pirates/>>.

resources, Emiratis were modest in their use of the sea. The recent large demand of seafood caused by higher rates of population, tourism, and trade has taken its toll on the fish populations.⁸ This recent demand of seafood is a problem that affects not only the UAE, but the Middle East fish populations as a whole.

Regarding trade, on a global level fish trade is regulated by the World Trade Organization and the United Nations.⁹ It is the UN organizations that address issues pertaining to the environment, sustainable methods, and food security.¹⁰

II. Finding a Solution to the Problem: Past, Present, and Future

Other nations, such as Kuwait, have felt the bite of overfishing as well, and depletion of resources led the Kuwaiti government to ban fishing for a year starting in 2011 to allow stocks to rebound.¹¹ This plan worked quite well for the Kuwaitis, who lifted the ban in August 2012 and hauled in abundant shrimp stocks of 400-450 baskets a day.¹²

Like Kuwait, the UAE has taken measures to address these issues of fish depletion. Environmental organizations, like the Environmental Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD), are taking surveys of stock, monitoring fishing activities, limiting fishing licenses, and regulating fishing methods.¹³ Countries developing organizations such as the EAD could make a drastic impact in protecting fish populations and ecosystems.

Also, an increased interest in creating sustainable fishing policies has encouraged investments in “aquaculture” projects.¹⁴ More investment in these projects on a regional or even international level would aid in protecting fish populations and ecosystems.

Another potential solution is the establishment of Marine Protected Areas under guidelines from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The IUCN has already achieved success in the region, in the Egyptian Mediterranean, El Sallum. This area, threatened by human actions, has become the country’s first Marine Protected Area on the Mediterranean coast.¹⁵

⁸ "FISHING." *UAE History & Traditions: Fishing*. N.p., n.d. Web. 14 Oct. 2012.
<<http://www.uaeinteract.com/history/trad/trd01.asp>>.

⁹ "Fish Trade Regulations." *FAO GLOBEFISH* -. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 Oct. 2012.
<<http://www.globefish.org/fish-trade-regulations-on-the-web.html>>.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Calderwood, James. "Over-fishing forces Kuwait to consider two-year ban." *The National*. Jul 8, 2011.
<<http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/over-fishing-forces-kuwait-to-consider-two-year-ban>>

¹² "Lots of Shrimps in Kuwait - Fishing Ban End." *Arab Times*. Aug 10, 2012.
<<http://www.arabtimesonline.com/NewsDetails/tabid/96/smId/414/ArticleID/186697/refTab/69/Default.aspx>>

¹³ "FISHING." *UAE History & Traditions: Fishing*. N.p., n.d. Web. 14 Oct. 2012.
<<http://www.uaeinteract.com/history/trad/trd01.asp>>.

¹⁴ "Fishing & Aquaculture Middle East Exhibition @ AGRAME." *Fishing and Aquaculture Middle East Exhibition*. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 Oct. 2012.
<<http://www.agrammiddleeast.com/Fishing/Home/>>.

¹⁵ "IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature." *IUCN*. N.p., 27 Aug. 2010. Web.

However, on an international level much work needs to be done to adequately protect fragile ecosystems.

III. Questions to Consider in Your Research

How has my country been affected by current fishing policies and trade regulations?
What steps has my country taken to address fish populations, ecosystems, and food security?
Has my country signed relevant treaties regarding fishing policies and trade regulations?
Would my country be supportive of establishing stricter legislation for fishing, establishing protection areas, implementing catch shares, or creating sustainable fisheries?
What fishing techniques does my country use?

IV. Questions a Resolution Might Answer

What action(s) might the Arab League take to protect fish populations and ecosystems?
Should a new treaty/protocol/etc. be drafted, or a previous document regarding fishing populations and trade regulations be revised or updated?
How might regional bodies be utilized?
What role might non-state actors, like the International Union for Conservation of Nature as well as other environmental groups play in developing a solution to the decline of fish populations?

V. Resources to Review

"Sustainable Seafood." *Hotelier Middle East News, Hospitality Industry News, UAE, Dubai Hotelier Directory*. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 Oct. 2012. <<http://www.hoteliermiddleeast.com/8177-sustainable-seafood/>>.

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"Sustainable Fishing Methods." *Sunset.com*. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 Oct. 2012. <<http://www.sunset.com/food-wine/flavors-of-the-west/sustainable-fishing-methods-00400000053176/>>.

"FAO Fisheries & Aquaculture - SmartFish." *FAO Fisheries & Aquaculture - SmartFish*. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 Oct. 2012. <<http://www.fao.org/fishery/smartfish/en>>.

"FISHING." *UAE History & Traditions: Fishing*. N.p., n.d. Web. 16 Oct. 2012. <<http://www.uaeinteract.com/history/trad/trd01.asp>>.

12 Oct. 2012.

<http://www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/marine/marine_our_work/marine_mpas/?5907/El-Sallum-Egypt-latests-environmental-success>.

Topic 2: Addressing the environmental risks of overland and maritime transportation of hydrocarbons.

I. Introduction to Topic

A. General Background

Most Americans should be familiar with the Deepwater Horizon blowout in the Gulf of Mexico on April 20, 2011. While the oil rig was primarily involved in the extraction stage, the event nonetheless highlighted the extreme damage that the unmitigated spread of hydrocarbons can have on aquatic environments. However, while extraction poses its own hurdles and challenges, the transportation of these hydrocarbons, notably natural gas (Methane) and crude oil raises a number of issues that also require attention and remedies.

Two recent and notable overland examples of this are the 2012 Enbridge crude pipeline rupture in Grand Marsh, Wisconsin, that spilled 50,000 gallons of crude oil that was largely contained to the pipeline area, but is still under investigation with an eye to how much damage the oil spill caused.¹⁶ The second is the Silver Tip pipeline used by Exxon to move tar sands from Alberta into the US that ruptured under the Yellowstone River, spilling an estimated 42,000-50,000 gallons of tar-sand crude directly into the waterway.¹⁷

In all of these cases, regulators were not given full information about what exactly was being transported and when maintenance was being performed. BP, Enbridge, and Exxon, all gained infamy for low-balling their estimates after the initial spills (both Enbridge and Exxon estimated in the low thousands), and despite fines that would drive most other businesses to bankruptcy, continue to post record profits and lobby against stricter legislation in earnest.

Additionally, decaying infrastructure leads to myriad minor gas explosions and leaks that damage water supplies used for irrigation and drinking, as well as injuring the people who work for the energy firms as well as ordinary citizens who happen to be in the vicinity of damaged infrastructure.

B. History of the Topic in the Arab World

The issue of hydrocarbon transportation has been around as long as Arab states have been extracting, refining, and transporting crude oil and natural gas. Aside from the problems associated with normal wear and tear, the hydrocarbon industry has proved to be a juicy target for terrorist groups and other entities, such as Saddam Hussein lighting the Kuwaiti oilfields during the Gulf War, resulting in the largest oil spill in history.¹⁸ The spill severely impacted the surrounding areas, threatening water supplies, marine life, as well as causing mass amounts of

¹⁶ "Cleanup from Adams County oil spill nearing completion." Associated Press. Aug 1, 2012. <http://host.madison.com/news/local/environment/cleanup-from-adams-county-oil-spill-nearing-completion/article_dd4ae614-e66d-11e1-96f5-001a4bcf887a.html>.

¹⁷ "Yellowstone River Oil Spill." Montana Government. <<http://yellowstoneriveroilspill.mt.gov/>>.

¹⁸ "10 Biggest Oil Spills in History." *Popular Mechanics*. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 Oct. 2012. <<http://www.popularmechanics.com/science/energy/coal-oil-gas/biggest-oil-spills-in-history>>.

pollution.¹⁹ Considering most of the world's hydrocarbon reserves are located within the Arab League, and that many transportation routes emanate from there, the issue is one that is more prominent there than anywhere else in the world.

II. Finding a Solution to the Problem: Past, Present, and Future

A large part of the problem is a lack of regulation and oversight. Maintenance is far less costly to the environment and people, if not the pocketbook, than mitigating damage from burst pipelines or a natural gas explosion, however when there is minimal regulation and widespread corruption, wealthy Multi-National corporations see no obligation to invest in training and supplies to maintain their property. When problems arise from outright infrastructure failure they simply pay a relatively small fine and replace the faulty equipment, leaving in their wake environmental damage that can last decades. [cite]

III. Questions to Consider in Your Research

How has my country been affected environmentally by hydrocarbon transportation?

Has my country been involved in any disagreements regarding the transportation of hydrocarbons?

What steps has my country taken to address environmental risks of transporting hydrocarbons?

Has my country been involved in any agreements concerning hydrocarbon transportation?

What regulations does my country have regarding hydrocarbon transportation?

Does my country have any hydrocarbon transportation routes going through it?

IV. Questions a Resolution Might Answer

What action(s) might the Arab League take to address the environmental risks of transporting hydrocarbons?

Should a new treaty/protocol/etc. be drafted, or a previous document revised or updated?

How might regional bodies be utilized?

What role might non-state actors play in developing a solution to the environmental risks of transporting hydrocarbons?

V. Resources to Review

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<http://www.cato.org/pubs/regulation/regv27n1/v27n1-1.pdf>.

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Department of Global Studies and Geography, Hofstra University. 2009.

<http://www.ewidgetsonline.com/dxreader/Reader.aspx?token=tOsaK3HE%2fEEOaxYZ7CDC>

¹⁹ "Saudi Arabia-The Environment and the 1991 Persian Gulf War." *Saudi Arabia-The Environment and the 1991 Persian Gulf War*. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 Oct. 2012.

http://www.mongabay.com/history/saudi_arabia/saudi_arabia-the_environment_and_the_1991_persian_gulf_war.html.

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Sule, Ashwini Kulkarni. *Buzzle.com*. Buzzle.com, 23 Jan. 2012. Web. 15 Oct. 2012. <<http://www.buzzle.com/articles/fossil-fuels-advantages-and-disadvantages.html>>.

"Hydrocarbon." *What Is ? Definition and Meaning*. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 Oct. 2012. <<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/hydrocarbon.html>>.

"Oil Transportation." - *Transportation Routes*. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 Oct. 2012. <<http://ckrhmt2008.weebly.com/transportation-routes.html>>.

Topic 3: Utilizing public-private partnerships in the areas of infrastructure, regional awareness and educational campaigns, development, and natural resource extraction with the goal of greater environmental protection.

I. Introduction to Topic

A. General Background

A public-private partnership (PPP) is defined as an arrangement between the public and private sector to provide a service to the general public. They can include projects in industry, infrastructure, natural resource extraction, energy consumption, etc. PPPs can differ greatly based on different sectors and countries.²⁰ A generic example of a PPP is the government contracting out individual operations in the construction and design of a road, such as the public sector hiring the private sector to aid in providing a public service.²¹ The UN resolution 21/7, calls on governments to seek economic relationships with the private sector in hopes to improve infrastructure.²²

B. History of the Topic in the Arab World

Public-private partnerships have been crucial in providing necessary and state-of-the-art infrastructure, research, and education for the Middle East, primarily the Gulf Region. Despite the wide use of public-private partnerships in the developed world, the Middle East and North African (MENA) regions have the lowest level of private infrastructure in the world.²³ PPPs haven't flourished in the MENA region, despite the need of improved infrastructure and educational campaigns throughout the region. This can be attributed to, people relying solely on the state to provide public services, such as education, basic infrastructure, energy, etc. While PPPs have been successful in small sectors in the Middle East, its nowhere near levels of other developed economies.²⁴ Recently the International Finance Corporation (IFC) has invested their effort into collaborating with governments in the MENA region along with private companies to facilitate the public-private partnership process. The IFC has been successful in their endeavors

²⁰Istrate, Emilia, and Robert Puentes. "Moving Forward on Public Private Partnerships: U.S. and International Experience with PPP Units." *Project on State and Metropolitan Innovation* (n.d.): n. pag. *Brookings Institute*. Web. <http://http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2011/12/08%20transportation%20istrate%20puentes/1208_transportation_istrate_puentes>.

²¹Istrate, Emilia, and Robert Puentes. "Moving Forward on Public Private Partnerships: U.S. and International Experience with PPP Units." *Project on State and Metropolitan Innovation* (n.d.): n. pag. *Brookings Institute*. Web. <http://http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2011/12/08%20transportation%20istrate%20puentes/1208_transportation_istrate_puentes>.

²² UN. "Sustainable Public-private Partnership Incentives for Attracting Large-scale Private- Sector Investment in Low-income Housing." N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Oct. 2012. <[Sustainable public-private partnership incentives for attracting large-scale private- sector investment in low-income housing](http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2012/12/20121012.unhcr.ppp.incentives.html)>.

²³ "IFC Middle East & North Africa - IFC Middle East and North Africa." *IFC Middle East & North Africa - IFC Middle East and North Africa*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Oct. 2012. <<http://ifcext.ifc.org/ifcext/mena.nsf/Content/home>>.

²⁴ "Luxury Goods & Duty Free - Business Intelligence Middle East - Bi-me.com - News, Analysis, Reports." *Luxury Goods & Duty Free - Business Intelligence Middle East - Bi-me.com - News, Analysis, Reports*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Oct. 2012. <<http://www.bi-me.com/main.php?c=3>>.

which have also had a positive effect on the environment. Notably in Morocco, where a PPP was initiated to grow the solar energy field in a country where sunlight is abundant.²⁵ The healthcare sector of Middle Eastern countries has also greatly improved due to the success of PPPs.²⁶ Although there are success stories, PPPs in the Middle East have much more to accomplish especially in terms of achieving the goal of greater environmental protection.

II. Finding a Solution to the Problem: Past, Present, and Future

With environmental protection in mind, the Qatar Foundations' Qatar Environmental & Energy Research Institute (QEERI) has been a key player in providing knowledge and research to policymakers on environmental issues. Life-Link Friendship Schools in partnership with UNESCO established the Earth Care Campaign, an education campaign with a purpose of spreading knowledge of how to protect the environment. The campaign is active in 9 Middle Eastern countries with programs in over 50 schools.²⁷ As oil is vital to many Arab economies, research on safe extraction is essential to the environment. The International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank, has been increasingly involved in commencing environmentally friendly infrastructure projects all across the Greater Middle East.²⁸ By involving world organizations, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, the region can learn the many benefits a public-private partnership in infrastructure, education, and natural resource extraction can have on the environment as well as the country's economy.

III. Questions to Consider in Your Research

How is my country currently engaging with the concept of PPPs?
What have PPPs done to improve the status of my country?
How have PPPs affected environmental protection in my country as well as in the region?
How should my country regulate PPPs? What laws should be in place to ensure a fair and equal partnership between the private and public sector?

IV. Questions a Resolution Might Answer

What role can the Arab League take in utilizing PPPs in member-states?
How can the PPPs improve the environment in the region?
Should there be regulations across the region on PPPs?
Can the Arab League be a player in bringing private companies together with the government to improve projects?

²⁵ "IFC Middle East & North Africa - IFC Middle East and North Africa." *IFC Middle East & North Africa - IFC Middle East and North Africa*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Oct. 2012. <<http://ifcext.ifc.org/ifcext/mena.nsf/Content/home>>.

²⁶ "Luxury Goods & Duty Free - Business Intelligence Middle East - Bi-me.com - News, Analysis, Reports." *Luxury Goods & Duty Free - Business Intelligence Middle East - Bi-me.com - News, Analysis, Reports*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Oct. 2012. <<http://www.bi-me.com/main.php?c=3>>.

²⁷ <http://earthcare.life-link.org/>

²⁸ "IFC Middle East & North Africa - IFC Middle East and North Africa." *IFC Middle East & North Africa - IFC Middle East and North Africa*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Oct. 2012. <<http://ifcext.ifc.org/ifcext/mena.nsf/Content/home>>.

V. Resources to Review

International Finance Corporation MENA

"IFC Middle East & North Africa - IFC Middle East and North Africa." *IFC Middle East & North Africa - IFC Middle East and North Africa*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Oct. 2012.

<<http://ifcext.ifc.org/ifcext/mena.nsf/Content/home>>.

Moving Forward on Public-Private Partnerships: U.S. and International Experience with PPP Units

Istrate, Emilia, and Robert Puentes. "Moving Forward on Public Private Partnerships: U.S. and International Experience with PPP Units." *Project on State and Metropolitan Innovation* (n.d.): n. pag. *Brookings Institute*. Web.

<http://http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2011/12/08%20transportation%20istrate%20puentes/1208_transportation_istrate_puentes>.

Building on the Monterrey Consensus: The Growing Role of Public-Private Partnerships in Mobilizing Resources for Development

"Building on the Monterrey Consensus: The Growing Role of Public-Private Partnerships in Mobilizing Resources for Development." *Weforum.com*. N.p., Sept. 2005. Web. 12 Oct. 2012.

Prospects and trends in Middle East PPP and infrastructure transactions

Collins, Nick, and Mark Godfrey. "Prospects and Trends in Middle East PPP and Infrastructure Transactions." *Pivatisation & Public Private Partnership Review 2012/13* (2012): n. pag. Print.

Topic 4: Developing comprehensive Arab League policies regarding animal welfare and animal living conditions and addressing the role of Arab countries as destinations or transit points for the illegal trafficking of animals.

I. Introduction to Topic

A. General Background

The deserts of the Arab world host a number of hardy and resilient animal species that have made their home in the inhospitable landscape. Unfortunately, urbanization of this great trade crossroads has made their habitat an ever-shrinking one. Preservation of these species should not be put on the back burner in the face of other domestic and international issues. Most pressing, however, is the upsurge of the illegal sale and transit of exotic animals from Asia and Africa into and through several of the Arab League member nations.

The problem is most acute in the Gulf states and North Africa, where exotic birds, large cats, and primates suffer in captivity, waiting to be sold as a status symbol to the wealthy throughout the League and Europe. These wealthy consumers are willing to pay exorbitant prices for these animals, such as \$50,000 for a rare white lion. Often these animals are improperly cared for and when the owner disposes of them it is through dangerous means that often lead to the further harm of the animals and, in the case of animals like big cats and reptiles, people.

Many of these animals often die in captivity or during transit for lack of proper care and facilities. Smugglers intent on making a profit will capture multiple animals of the same species knowing that some will die in route, as the animals often change hands multiple times in enclosures not even remotely designed for them. While the practice is technically illegal under international laws and treaties, laws and penalties designed to dissuade smugglers often are not equivalent to the profits that they stand to make. The smuggling of exotic animals occurs, due to a thriving market that encourages such acts. All Arab League countries, with the exception of Lebanon and Iraq, are members to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which outlaws wild animal trade.²⁹ While laws do exist in Middle Eastern countries banning exotic animal trade, they are frequently ignored by officials and aren't heavily enforced.³⁰

B. History of the Topic in the Arab World

On a sanctioned level, camel racing is a popular sport in the Arab world, however, not all operations are carried out in a legal manner, with reports of animal mistreatment polarizing the sport. These allegations have led to official reaction from Arab governments, notably the UAE, where camel racing sees most of its popularity. While camel racing is a traditional sport, and can suffer under illegal mishandling like any other organized sport, the biggest problem for the Arab

²⁹ "Welcome to CITES." *Welcome to CITES*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Oct. 2012. <<http://www.cites.org/>>.

³⁰ "Exotic Animals Symbolize Luxury in Lebanon." *Exotic Animals Symbolize Luxury in Lebanon*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Oct. 2012. <<http://www.seattleglobalist.com/2012/08/13/exotic-animals-symbolize-luxury-in-lebanons-illegal-trade/5809>>.

League is controlling the increasing trade of illegal exotic animals. Numerous sources identify wealthy Gulf states as popular transit and destination locations for these creatures, as well as North African states that cater to wealthy European and international clientele. The region's location as a trade hub has made it a popular place to trade all variety of goods and services, however, when that trade adversely impacts endangered animals and violates international treaties, something must be done. The ownership of exotic animals, such as lions, tigers, monkeys, cheetahs, and many more, is viewed as a sign of luxury in the Middle East. There have been accounts of wealthy citizens walking their pet cheetahs through a public mall on a leash.³¹ Even though laws ban the exotic animal trade and international treaties have been drafted and signed by Arab countries, ownership of exotic animals as pets still in widely popular in the region.

II. Finding a Solution to the Problem: Past, Present, and Future

While laws and treaties are already in place to discourage the practice of animal trafficking, they are clearly not forceful enough to impact the trade, which seems to continue unimpeded. CITES has been successful in lowering the import and export of illegal exotic animals, but more needs to be done by member states. Current laws need to be more forcibly enforced, while new laws should be drafted if need be. Education for customs officials and private citizens on the risks and hazards associated with ownership of exotic animals is one way to broaden knowledge of what is endangered or illegally traded. Lack of regulation and enforcement has also been identified as a problem associated with the proliferation of the exotic animal trade. While some states such as Egypt and the UAE have drawn up their own legislation to curb the trade, it is still a large, thriving, and bloody industry.

III. Questions to Consider in Your Research

Is my country a signatory to CITES?

Does my country currently have any laws concerning exotic animal trade?

What has my country done to stop the trade of exotic animals?

Are there any laws in my country concerning animal welfare?

Would my country be supportive of stricter penalties for traffickers, stronger customs enforcement, or seizure and repatriation of exotic animals?

IV. Questions a Resolution Might Answer

What can the Arab League do to stop the illegal trade of exotic animals between member states?

How can the Arab League keep member states accountable if they aren't enforcing current animal trade laws?

How can the GCC play a part in reducing the trade of exotic animals?

V. Resources to Review

³¹ Elwazer, Schams. "Lions, Tigers Become Problem Pets in the Gulf - CNN.com." *CNN*. Cable News Network, n.d. Web. 12 Oct. 2012. <<http://www.cnn.com/2012/04/04/world/meast/endangered-animal-pets/index.html>>.

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Colombo, Francesca. “Animal Trafficking – A Cruel Billion-Dollar Business.” Inter Press Service. Sept 6, 2003. <http://www.commondreams.org/headlines03/0906-06.htm>

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http://www.ehow.com/about_5164483_middle-eastern-desert-animals.html

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<http://www.cnn.com/2012/04/04/world/meast/endangered-animal-pets/index.html>

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<http://www.peta.org/issues/companion-animals/inside-the-exotic-animal-trade.aspx>

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