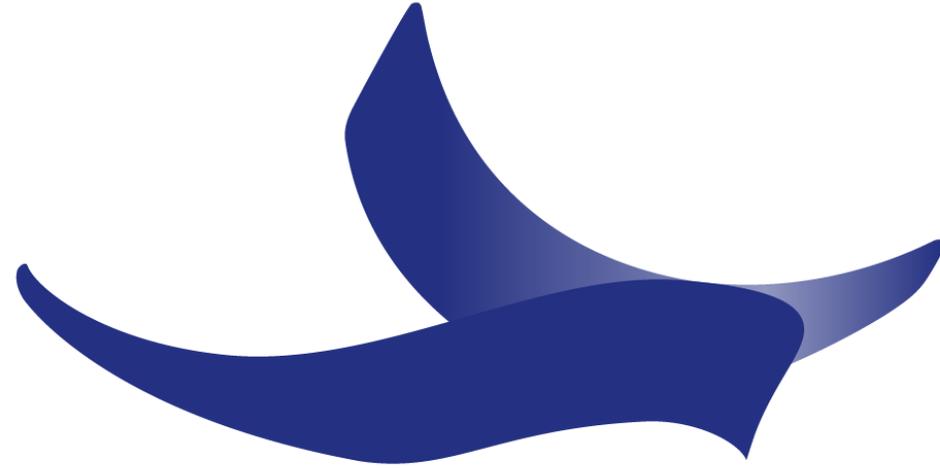


Society for
the Protection
of Nature in
Lebanon



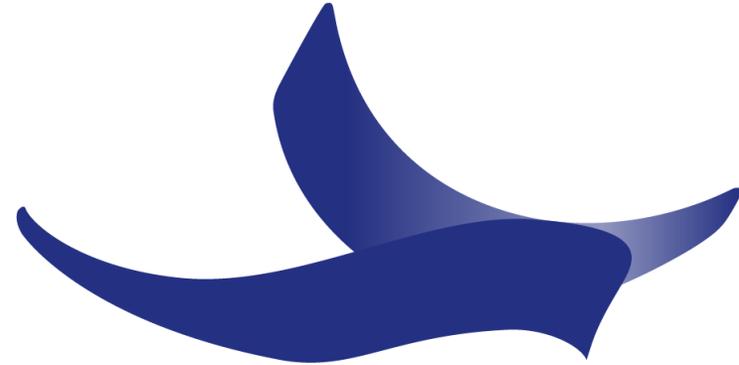
SPNL

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حماة الامر

About The Society for the Protection of Nature in LBN (SPNL)

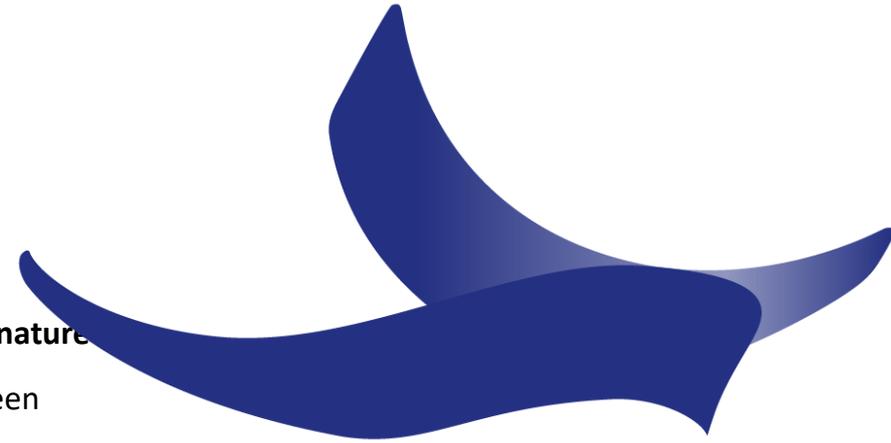
- One of the leading & **oldest environmental NGOs** in Lebanon (**est. in 1986**)
- Partner of Birdlife Int'l LBN
- Around 43 employees working all over Lebanon (Head office in Keyfoun, ML)
- Dedicated to the **conservation of Lebanon's natural and cultural heritage** against today's major environmental challenges pollution, over-grazing, overfishing, desertification, water scarcity, habitat degradation, rapid urbanization, resource overuse and unmanaged tourism.
- Provides **solutions on biodiversity conservation**: like anti-poaching activities, re-forestation, habitat protection, monitoring species, research, sustainable agriculture, climate change mitigation, water management, marine conservation & eco-tourism.
- Envisions that the use of natural resources & conservation efforts are only sustainable through **innovative & community-based tools**.
- Operates through **"local heroes/Guardians"**: young, trained citizens from the community who feel responsible towards nature. (community ownership is key).
- Our activities have a significant impact on **marginalized communities**, providing them with opportunities for sustainable livelihoods and improved quality of life.



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About The Society for the Protection of Nature in LBN (SPNL)

- SPNL's strategy is **decentralized** from the government and **links people to nature**.
- Provides complementary environmental **awareness & trainings** such as green school education for children, capacity building for the youth, women empowerment & skills' enhancement, social cohesion, peacebuilding and advocacy & partnerships.
- All solutions provided by SPNL fall under the [Hima](#) Umbrella. (Holistic Approach)
- "Hima" means **protected place**. It's an ancient system that originated in the Arabic Peninsula as a **conservation tool** where people protected green spaces by banning tree-cutting, dumping waste (Land, water), hunting, violence, war.. **(without peace, conservation cannot be sustained)**.
- SPNL strives to **revive** the Hima since 2004 by **incorporating modern science, art and technology into the traditional approach** while preserving its values & culture (Hybrid Hima system) .
- SPNL established 32 Himas so Far in Lebanon



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Criteria for Selecting Hima

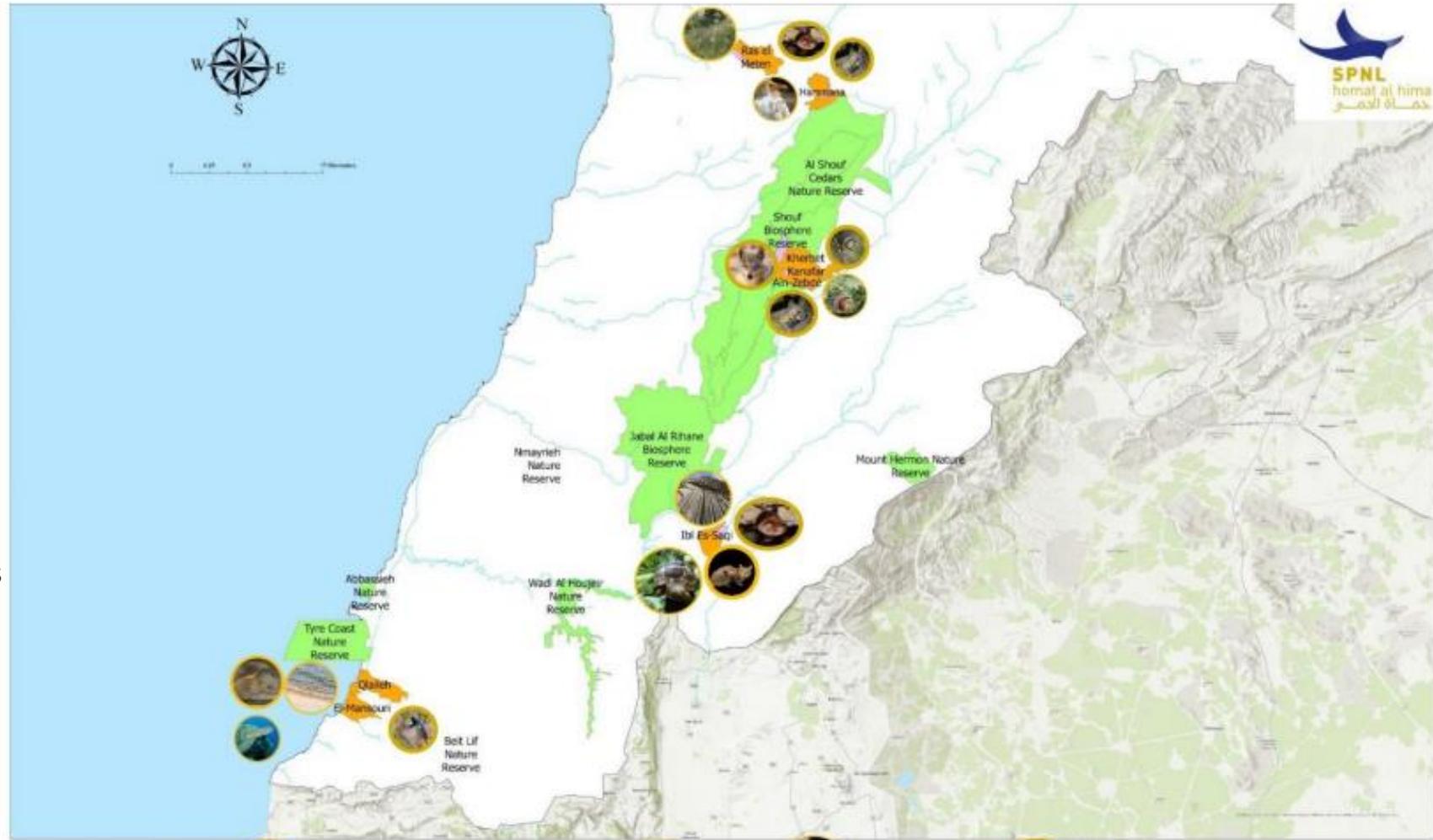
Ownership: Publicly owned to serve the good of the community

Nature & biodiversity values: Possess important natural resource, globally endangered species

Socio-economic & cultural values: Contributes to the livelihoods of the community, empowers minorities, social cohesion and traditional & cultural practices

SPNL promotes conservation of endangered species through :

- Scientific surveys
- Action plans
- Awareness campaigns
- conservation efforts

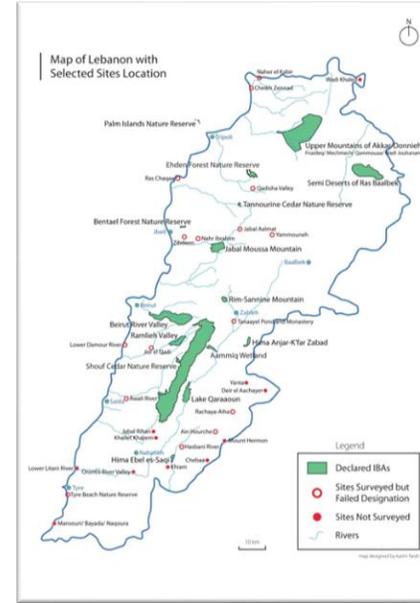


Map Key:



Map endangered Species

Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBBA)



- For 40 years, SPNL worked to protect nature and wildlife, resulting in the declaration of 15 Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) and Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) in Lebanon
- Variety in habitats, ecosystems, biodiversity & bottlenecks for migration

From the 15 identified IBBA sites only 5 were Nature Reserves

The other 10 don't have any protection status and lie in public lands

This required a prompt action to ensure their effective management

AL HIMA الحمى

Hima vs Nature Reserve

1) HIMA	2) Natural Reserve
Protected area	Protected area
Declared by local authorities & managed by locally-elected committees	Declared by law & managed by Government-appointed committees
Sustainability of natural resources + livelihoods of communities Sustainable use: human activities ranging (grazing, fishing, habitat manipulation..)	Strict conservation with limited community benefits and human intervention, mainly research, monitoring & eco-tourism
Cost-effective and could include income generating activities	Financially Exhausting and sustainability depends on government support



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2024 Impact Highlights of SPNL:

 **Himas Established:**
2 new Himas created, fostering community-based conservation

 **Birds Monitored:**
18,000 birds monitored, including 5 endangered species

 **Birds Rescued:**
12 birds rescued and rehabilitated

 **Patrol Operations:**
34 patrol operations conducted by the Anti-Poaching Unit (APU)

 **Women Empowered:**
27 women empowered through various initiatives by Souk el Hima

 **Farmers Supported:**
26 farmers received support to enhance sustainable practices by Hima Farm

 **Awareness Sessions:**
4,800 children educated through awareness sessions by SNOW (School with No Walls)
7 green schools established, promoting environmental education

 **Hima Guardians:**
166 Hima Guardians trained and empowered by Homat Al Hima

 **Hiking Trails Visitors:**
6,700 visitors explored by Droub el Hima

 **Renewable Energy:**
1 renewable energy solution implemented, advancing sustainability

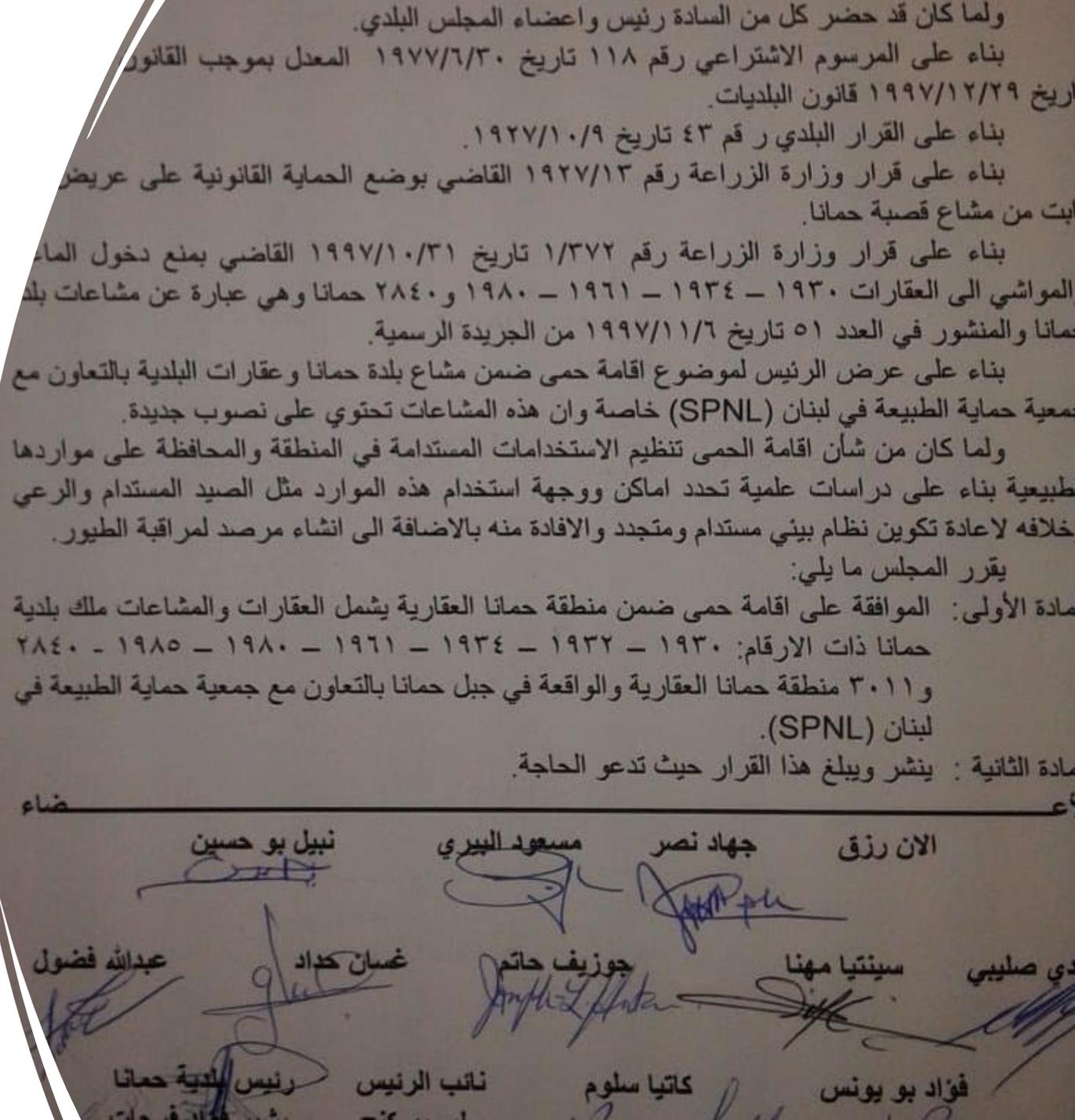


Success Story: Hima Hammana

The municipal council of Hammana, one of the Mount Lebanon villages, declaring part of the municipal land as Hima for sustainable use such as ecotourism, responsible grazing, and responsible hunting:

- Around 25 residents “local heroes” of Hammana signed on to be part of the project and received training to run different activities for the project (monitoring, agriculture, etc..)
- Around 5 households in Hammana agreed to have their homes serve as guest houses to receive and host visitors for the project.

Key Tools Developed under Hima Programme: Hima Guideline Manual



Success Story:

Anahita, an endangered Egyptian vulture Rehabilitated after being shot by poachers in Lebanon and then release back into the wild.

In collaboration with the Middle East Center for Sustainable Hunting and the Committee Against Bird Slaughter (CABS), SPNL, through its anti-poaching unit (APU) has been instrumental in reducing illegal bird killing (IKB) and promoting sustainable hunting practices by:

- Identifying & reporting hunting violations
- Supporting Hunting law enforcement
- Providing awareness sessions with municipalities, shooters, youth, schools & universities.

Key Tools Developed under Responsible Hunting Programme: Hunting Guide, awareness campaign: Léo Burnette, generating sonic (sound) of endangered species adopted by famous brand (BMW) (ex, instead of hearing BMW's brand sonic, you would hear the sound of a crying wolf)



Success Story:

Planting 2,500 trees in two Lebanese villages

-
- Re-forestation by growing fruit trees such as almond, olive and cherry was an important step to restore damages to green space caused by both the civil war and fires.
 - The trees planted in Hima Anjar & Hammana will also restore ecosystems, protect animals and migratory birds



Success Story: HIMA Anjar & Kfarzabad

The project has successfully engaged local communities in eco-tourism activities: birdwatching, guided nature walks & educational programs all leading to the restoration of wetlands that are essential habitats for endangered bird species like Syrian Serin. Also, these activities were alternative income-resources for the locals.



SNOW Programme School with No Walls

Goal:

- Educate children (aged 8-12) on concepts like conservation, biodiversity or natural resources
- Prepare them to join Homat Al Hima program (Local Heroes) at a later stage

Unique Approach:

- Integrating environmental education into the regular curriculum through outdoor activities
- Providing interactive educational tools to be used by teachers
- Capacity building for children: exploring their Hima heritage, and learning to preserve it

Key Tools Developed: short interactive videos, butterfly coloring book, PowerPoint presentations for all themes



Homat Al Hima

Guardians & Heroes

Goals:

- Train and equip motivated youth from local Hima communities (15-35)
- Provide certain skillsets and knowledge enabling them for leadership and job creation aiming for sustainability (socially & environmentally)
- Promote them as inspiring leaders of their own communities to preserve both culture and biodiversity

Key Tools Developed: HH Manual provides detailed guidelines on how to conserve biodiversity and manage natural resources sustainably within the Hima system





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Droub el Hima Programme: Hima Trails

Goal:

Linking various Himas through ancient, historical, and natural paths. These trails not only highlight the unique biodiversity of each village but also foster community engagement and sustainable through which the sites are managed by the community.

Key Tools Developed:

- Mobile Application (In process)
- Guiding Manual (In process)



Souk Hima Programme

Goals:

- Promote and enhance traditional skills & cultural products of local communities
- Upgrade the livelihood of rural communities in Himas and IBBA's while linking their products to Nature

Key Tools Developed:

- **Hima Women Guideline Manual:** This manual provides comprehensive guidelines for empowering women : within the Hima framework
- Souk Hima marketplace (Virtual /Online) and HIMA Shops (دكان الحمى)



Hima Farm Programme



Goals:

- Promotes sustainable agriculture (organic Farming)
- Enhances the livelihoods of local communities by providing trainings for local farmers
- Supports farmers in developing high-quality, traditional products that are linked to the natural resources and biodiversity of their Hima sites.
- Promotes Hima Farm “Heroes” as role models for community.

Key Tools Developed:

- Hima Farm Criteria Document
- Training Subjects (Powerpoints)



Hima for Peace (H4P) Programme

Goal:

Foster harmony and unity among different communities in Lebanon which suffered conflict over natural resources. This project, through Hima approach, created sustainable water systems, communal gardens(shared spaces), and peace trails(cultural aspects), all which also contribute to nature conservation and sustainability.

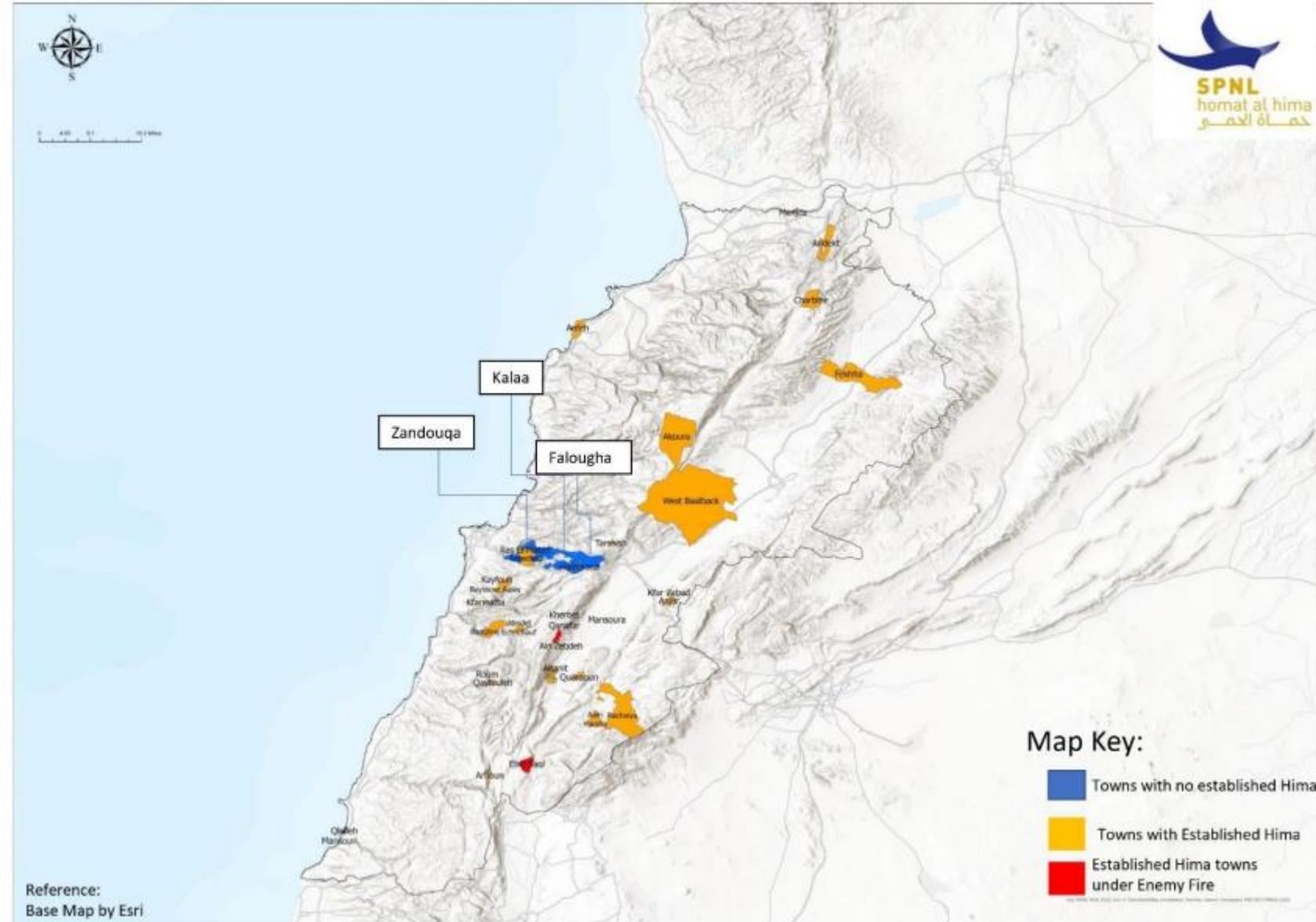
Key tools developed: Hima Charter: A formal agreement signed by multiple villages to commit to the principles of sustainable resource management and peaceful coexistence





- SPNL collaborates with various donors and stakeholders, including international organizations and government agencies, to achieve its conservation goals.
- Also, established agreements and partnerships with municipalities, ministries and educational institutions have been crucial in supporting our projects and initiatives.
- Efforts have been recognized globally, including the IUCN's Motion adopted in 2012 during the 5th IUCN World Conservation Congress. Winner of AEON Midori Prize 2018. UNDP included SPNL's Himas in protected areas map (2024)

- The map highlights the locations of existing Hima's, areas currently under threat due to the Lebanese war, and towns anticipated to become new Hima's in the future.
- It visually represents the urgent need for conservation efforts amidst the ongoing conflict, with hopes for expansion and protection in the coming years



SPNL Looking Forward

Goals:

- Establish the first Natural park in Lebanon
- Expand from identification and selection to a [network of Himas](#) covering Lebanon, connecting corridors and buffer zones with fragmented habitats and ecosystems. This network aims to link protected areas and communities, with potential replications in the Middle East.
- Establish Hima biodiversity hub at [Luc Hoffmann Hima Home](#), transforming it into a green building that serves as an awareness hub and helps SPNL in energy and cost savings, improving environmental footprint.





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Thank you!