

LAND RECLAMATION PROJECTS INCLUDE IRRIGATION, DESALINATION WORKS

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[Excerpts] In the old days, Iraq was one of the most fertile agricultural lands, but the recurrence of floods leads to the salinity of these fertile lands. Subsequently, the drop in agricultural production has necessitated in taking reasonable measures for treating these lands. However, as a first step, an organisation of Land Reclamation was founded.

One of the major projects is the "Suwairah Land Reclamation Project."

The project is situated in the District of Suwairah in Wassit Governorate, South of Iraq. The soil of this area is of sedimentary type but has a high rate of salinity. The granted total of the area is 160 thousand donums.

However, the Project will be implemented in four states:

First Stage

An area of 5,600 donums was reclaimed in mid 1975 and was provided with a pumping station with a capacity of 4.5 cubic meter per second for irrigating these lands. These lands are affiliated to the State Farms Administration.

Second Stage

This stage covers 35 thousand donums. These areas have been provided with water through two main canals. A pump station provides these canals with 3 cubic meter of water per second but now another new pumping station of 9 cubic capacity is under construction. However, this stage is implemented through the Direct Execution Method by the State Establishment of Rafidain Valley. The civil works of this stage was completed by Mid June, 1979.

Third Stage

The third stage covers the reclamation of an area of 63 thousand donums. In fact, recently the implementation of the reclamation works were started through the Direct Method.

Fourth Stage

The implementation of reclaiming an area of 55 thousand donums is supposed to start late this year through the Direct Method. However, the third and fourth stage will be irrigated by a main stream. (25) cubic meters second of water will be pumped to the stream.

Reclamation Works

Through the following three basic stages, reclamation works are carried out:

1. Designs and studies--This stage studies carried out on soil such as survey, classification of lands besides topographic surveys.
2. Implementation of reclamation--Implementation is carried out according to designs already prepared.

However, the following main activities are carried out:

- A network of sewages are constructed through using plastic pipes.
- A network of drainages are also constructed which ends with a main stream.
- Construction of an irrigation network starting with a main canal and ending with field sub-canal.
- Levelling of the lands according to the designs.
- Construction of irrigation and drainage control installations.
- Establishing modern pumping stations for providing the necessary quantities of water for farming.

Drainage and Farming

This stage is considered the final for reclamation. It covers soil tests to find the rate of salinity and fertility after which farming is carried out.

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