

ERAW
18/7SOIL STUDIES PROGRAMME

West German and Jordanian teams are currently conducting hydrological studies at Lejoun, southern Jordan, to pave the way for a feasibility study on the exploitation of oil shale from the region.

The teams are from the Natural Resources Authority (NRA) and the West German Geological Survey Service. A NRA spokesman said that the studies are a follow-up of those conducted nearly two years ago whose results proved encouraging.

In the light of previous studies, he said, the two sides decided to continue research and to carry out detailed studies aimed at determining the water supplies required for the project. The studies also entail research on the type and amounts of reserve shale and the prospect of its exploitation, he added.

The NRA and West Germany will also co-operate in preparing a detailed study on the geological, engineering and mechanical aspects of soils and rocks in all areas where roads, public buildings and towns are being built, the spokesman said. He added that the project, expected to take five years to complete starting in 1985, is one of the most significant projects undertaken by the NRA and the first of its kind in the Arab World.

The project entails conducting detailed studies on the characteristics of soil and rock which serve as the foundations for roads and public buildings in order to avoid areas where landslides are likely to occur, the spokesman said.

According to the spokesman, the study will cover various towns and villages, main roads and installations as well as dams and bridges in the country. The aim of the project is to gather precise information about the nature of the ground on which buildings and roads are to be built or have been built.

He said that the West German government will supply excavators and other equipment needed for the project and for the testing of soil and rock.

WORLD BANK LOAN TO FINANCE WATER PROJECTS

The cabinet has endorsed an agreement with the World Bank to grant Jordan a \$ 30 million loan and asked Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri to empower Jordan's ambassador to the United States to sign the loan agreement on behalf of the Jordanian government.

The loan is to finance 50 per cent of the water and sewerage projects in Ramtha, Mafraq, Anjara, Ajloun, Di Kufrunjeh, Madaba and Ma'an.

The loan was agreed upon in talks held with the World Bank last month by a team from the National Planning Council and the Jordanian Water Authority (JWA). JWA's director-general said that the projects to be carried out include the building of sewerage networks, wastewater treatment plants and improvements to existing water networks in Jordanian towns.

Work on the project, which is expected to cost a total of \$ 60 million, will start early in 1985 after studies have been completed and designs drawn up, he said.