



How can Lebanon help to make its artisanal salinas more sustainable?

Key policy recommendations

By developing relevant laws and regulations, putting in place incentive programmes and providing technical support, national and local governments can enhance the management of artisanal salinas, to generate both economic and environmental benefits. This factsheet highlights the main recommendations compiled by the ENI CBC MED MedArtSal project based on the analysis of artisanal salinas in Lebanon;

ESTABLISH A COOPERATIVE OF OWNERS of Salinas who actively participate in law and decision-making related Salinas and request infrastructure maintenance

FACILITATE THE WORK of salt workers during the maintenance season by simplifying the process to obtain permissions

PROMOTE GREATER DIVERSIFICATION OF ACTIVITIES by authorizing or removing bureaucratic hurdles to certain commercial activities such as ecotourism

PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE VALUE of artisanal Salinas through new regulations, promoting their recognition as UNESCO World Heritage and developing a certification model for artisanal salt

LEGALIZE THE STATUS OF SALINAS by both updating and creating regulations and policies, aiming to reduce or limit the import of salt and to facilitate the export of artisanal salt

PROMOTE USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES to optimize the production while respecting traditional knowledge and helping develop new salt products



In Lebanon, artisanal salt producers face various challenges that affect their productivity and profitability. The primary challenges relate to the legal status of the Salinas, which are mainly rented from monasteries. In addition, there is a deficit in regulations due to their age, lack of adaptation to the current salt context and lack of coordination among administrative bodies. Promoting local and artisanal products is difficult due to limited knowledge and the lack of cooperatives where companies work together. Likewise, many salt producers experience difficulties to maintain their facilities, many of which have been abandoned for years.

SWOT

W Weaknesses

- **Lacking infrastructures:** better infrastructures could allow to develop tourism in Salinas: signage, tourist information points, accesses, basic services, etc.
- **Need for direct financial public aid and credit,** as well as advice to support corporate actions and brand development
- **Limited marketing efforts:** lack of promotion (both physical and online). Poor knowledge of market segmentation
- **Quality certification:** lack of synergies between Salinas and associations to develop common quality standards, for example, appellations of origin, labels, etc.
- **Support to entrepreneurship:** business projects require initial support to assess project viability, as well as for the implementation, helping to tackle both economic and administrative challenges
- **Low levels of profitability:** artisanal salt products are usually undervalued
- **Land and property management:** salinas often lay within neglected land, where ownership is fragmented.

SWOT

T Threats

- **Uncertain legal** status of salinas, for example, when land is rented from religious entities or when the timeframe remains unspecified
- **Inconsistent regulations for this sector** (laws may be very old, not adapted to current context, offering insufficient coverage, etc)
- **Costly maintenance** of the structures of the Salinas for small businesses and entrepreneurs
- **Low competitiveness** of local and organic products compared to the prices of industrial salt
- **Lack of a legal framework** to protect and promote the artisanal management of salt pans
- **Lack of coordination inside public administration,** high amount of bureaucracy slowing down the processes





Despite these challenges, Lebanon has abundant natural resources, including high-quality products and services that are currently highly demanded in various economic sectors. This presents enormous potential for diversification of products and activities in the artisanal Salinas. However, developing complementary activities to the extraction of salt, such as ecotourism and gastronomic tourism, would require more public administrative and financial support. The creation of own brands and denominations of origin would be crucial for promoting the products effectively.



Strengths

- **Abundance of natural resources in Salinas** that can be harnessed to provide economic benefits, but also for nature, tourism activity, heritage and cultural preservation, as well as food and gastronomy-related
- **Promoting Fleur de sel** a highly valued salt variety in haute cuisine
- **Diversifying products and services** (macro & microalgae, tourism, outdoor activities to maximise benefits
- Very specific and high-quality products and services that can **only be obtained or developed** in certain places, such as in the Mediterranean
- Potential to create **gourmet products** for which there is growing interest



Opportunities

- **Improving the protection of important natural sites** through salt-production activities
- **Developing “salt tourism”** as a business model that harnesses the beauty of the landscape and ecological value of artisanal Salinas
- **Developing local ecotourism clusters** to promote tourism in the zone concerned
- **Boom of gastronomic tourism** is creating a high demand for natural, healthy, functional and organic products
- **Developing a single designation of origin** or label, which unifies several different brands, especially to target international markets
- Carrying out some **institutional promotion** and local direct sales actions in the municipalities could help to increase revenue



artisanal salinas

The MedArtSal Network

is defining common priorities for the sustainable maintenance and development of artisanal salinas in four Mediterranean countries (Italy, Spain, Lebanon and Tunisia)



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