



Aga Khan Award for Architecture

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WINNING PROJECTS

### **Wadi Hanifa Wetlands**

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

*Planners:* Moriyama & Teshima Planners Limited & Buro Happold in joint venture

*Client:* High Commission for the Development of Arriyadh/Arriyadh Development Authority

### **Project Description**

Located in the middle of the Najd Plateau of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Wadi Hanifa (or Hanifa valley) is the longest and most important valley near Riyadh, a natural water drainage course for an area of over 4,000 square kilometres and a unique geographical feature in this dry region. Until recently, many segments of the valley had been exploited in an aggressive and environmentally destructive manner. In an effort to redress the balance between the resources of the *wadi* and the people living around it, the Arriyadh Development Authority has implemented a comprehensive development strategy, a programme of works that aims to restore and develop Wadi Hanifa as an environmental, recreational and tourism resource. Project works so far have included the introduction of landscaping, conservation of the natural environment, development of recreational areas for the people of Riyadh, enhancement of agricultural land in the valley, and the creation of an environmentally sensitive wastewater treatment facility that provides additional water resources for the rural and urban inhabitants of the region.



## Jury Citation

“This project reverses the tide of rapid urban development, which has seen public space in many cities within the Muslim world fall victim to expropriation and other practices that deprive the population of its resources. This invariably happens at the cost of environmental values and sensitive ecosystems. The Wadi Hanifa Wetlands project eloquently demonstrates an alternative ecological way of urban development. It shows how a major natural phenomenon which, through the course of urbanisation, became a litter-strewn and dangerous place - a scar on the face of the capital city - can be transformed by sensitive planning attentive to social values and imaginative infrastructure-driven landscape solutions.

“The Award has been given in recognition of the project’s vision and persistence in developing a sustainable environment. Using landscape as an ecological infrastructure, the project has restored and enhanced the natural systems’ capacity to provide multiple services, including cleaning the contaminated water, mediating the natural forces of flood, providing habitats for biodiversity and creating opportunities for recreational, educational and aesthetic experiences.”



## Project Data

### *Client*

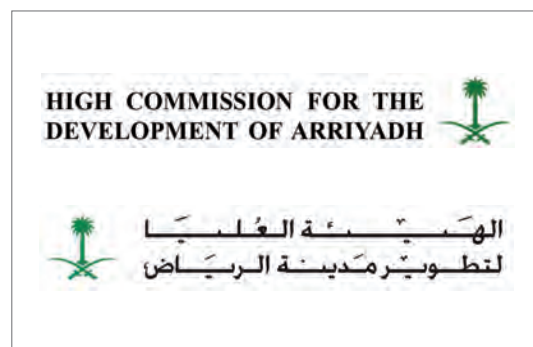
High Commission for the Development of Arriyadh/ Arriyadh Development Authority, Saudi Arabia:

- HRH Prince Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Chairman of the High Commission for the Development of Arriyadh.
- HRH Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Deputy Chairman of the High Commission for the Development of Arriyadh.
- Abdullatif bin Abdulmalik Al-Sheikh, Member of the High Commission for the Development of Arriyadh and President of the Arriyadh Development Authority.

<i>Landscape Architects</i>	Moriyama & Teshima Planners Limited, Canada George Stockton, President
<i>Consulting Engineers</i>	Buro Happold, UK Roderick Macdonald, Chairman
<i>Catchment Area</i>	4,000 km <sup>2</sup> over a 120 km stretch
<i>Cost</i>	US\$ 160 million
<i>Design Completed</i>	2001 (and ongoing) 2004-2007 (and ongoing)
<i>Website</i>	<a href="http://www.arriyadh.com">www.arriyadh.com</a>
<i>Bibliography</i>	Arriyadh Development Authority/Moriyama & Teshima/Buro Happold, <i>Wadi Hanifah Comprehensive Development Plan</i> (October 2002)

### **Arriyadh Development Authority**

The High Commission for the Development of Arriyadh, chaired by HRH Prince Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, was established in 1974 (1394H). The High Commission oversees the economic, social, cultural, architectural, environmental and infrastructural development of the Saudi Arabian capital, and coordinates the activities of public and private organisations engaged in developments of the city.



The Arriyadh Development Authority (ADA) is the executive arm and implementing agency of the High Commission. It is responsible for instituting policies and procedures through comprehensive, strategic, long-term plans designed to raise the efficiency of the services and infrastructural facilities in the city and for the implementation of comprehensive development projects in Riyadh, with the ultimate goal of improving the living standards of its inhabitants.

The High Commission received the Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 1989 for the Al-Kindi Plaza and Hayy Assafarat Landscaping; in 1995 for the Great Mosque of Riyadh and Development of the Old City Centre; and in 1998 for the Tuwaiq Palace in Riyadh.

### **Moriyama & Teshima Planners Limited**

Moriyama & Teshima is a Canadian architecture, planning and landscape architecture firm that has, over the past 30 years, built a body of landscapes and master plans for urban environments, ecological regions and entire watersheds. In 2001, the High Commission for the Development

of Arriyadh commissioned the Joint Venture of Moriyama & Teshima Planners Limited and Buro Happold to develop a Comprehensive Development Plan for Wadi Hanifa.

### **Buro Happold**

Buro Happold is an engineering, design, planning, project management and consulting services firm founded in 1976 in Bath, UK. The firm operates worldwide and in almost all areas of engineering for the built environment including buildings, infrastructure and environmental projects.