



ACTIVITY REPORT 2022/2023



AFALULA

AFALULA
2018-2023

5 YEARS

CULTURE & HERITAGE
ARCHAEOLOGY
ARCHITECTURE & URBAN DEVELOPMENT
TOURISM & HOSPITALITY
SECURITY & SAFETY
EQUESTRIAN PROJECTS
HUMAN CAPITAL
ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURES
BOTANICAL PRODUCTS
AGRICULTURE

ACTIVITY REPORT

2022 / 2023

**FRENCH
AGENCY
FOR ALULA
DEVELOPMENT**



Contents

FOREWORD

JEAN-YVES LE DRIAN,
AFALULA CHAIRMAN

EDITO

GÉRARD MESTRALLET,
AFALULA EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN

INTRODUCTION

- _ THE FRENCH AGENCY FOR ALULA DEVELOPMENT
- _ A TWOFOLD MISSION
- _ SOME FLAGSHIP PROJECTS
- _ SUSTAINABILITY AT THE CORE OF THE ALULA PROJECT
- _ OFFICIAL VISITS & COMMITTEES

2022 / 2023 ACHIEVEMENTS & PROJECTS

- _ GENERAL SECRETARIAT
- _ CULTURE & HERITAGE
- _ ARCHAEOLOGY
- _ ARCHITECTURE & URBAN DEVELOPMENT
- _ TOURISM & HOSPITALITY
- _ SECURITY & SAFETY
- _ EQUESTRIAN PROJECTS
- _ HUMAN CAPITAL
- _ ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURES
- _ BOTANICAL PRODUCTS
- _ AGRICULTURE
- _ COMMUNICATION, PUBLIC RELATIONS,
MARKETING & INNOVATION

CROSS-DIVISION PROJECTS

- _ WATER
- _ OASIS
- _ VILLA HEGRA
- _ ALULA ARTIST RESIDENCIES

AFALULA TEAM





Foreword

JEAN-YVES LE DRIAN
AFALULA CHAIRMAN
(as of 26 July 2023)

On 26 July, the President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron, appointed me Chairman of the French Agency for AIUla Development. I am honoured by this new and important mission.

First of all, I would like to pay tribute to the work carried out to date by my predecessor, Gérard Mestrallet, who founded in 2018 the AFALULA Agency, mobilised a team of the best experts, and, in close cooperation with our Saudi partners of the Royal Commission for AIUla, laid the decisive groundwork for the success of this major project.

With the Vision 2030 plan, His Royal Highness the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom, Mohammed bin Salman, has initiated a shift towards modernising the country and diversifying its economy. By focusing on youth, innovation, sustainability and openness to the world, he is strengthening the Kingdom's role as a driving force in international trade and relations.

The AIUla project is at the heart of this ambition. Its aim is to turn the region into a major cultural and tourist attraction, by celebrating its multi-millennial history. Indeed, AIUla has been a remarkable crossroads of civilisations that have left behind an inestimably rich heritage. By reconnecting with its great history, Saudi Arabia is reminding the world of the Kingdom's contribution to the universal narrative.

The Agency's mission is to support Saudi Arabia in this transformation by mobilising French excellence in regional development, cultural engineering and tourism. It is by acting as a catalyst that France will be able to fulfil its vital mission: create the conditions for enhanced international cooperation in the Middle East and worldwide.

I am pleased to be working alongside the AFALULA teams and our Saudi partners to continue the work already underway to promote AIUla international outreach and the future of the Kingdom.

JM Le Drian

EDITO



“Since 2018,
we have taken
decisive steps
to make the
Nabataean city a
cultural capital of
the Kingdom.”



Gérard MESTRALLET
AFALULA Executive Chairman
(July 2018 - July 2023)

Our annual report has a special dimension today, as a few months ago we celebrated the 5th anniversary of the signing of the intergovernmental agreement between France and Saudi Arabia for the sustainable development of the then-little-known AlUla region. That was April 10, 2018, at the Élysée Palace, in the presence of Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic, and His Royal Highness Mohammed bin Salman, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia chose to capitalize on the unique potential of this land of exceptional natural and cultural heritage.

Chosen for its cultural outreach, France established the French Agency for AlUla Development on July 13, 2018. AFALULA is committed to its two founding missions: to design and implement the project in collaboration with its Saudi partner, the Royal Commission for AlUla, and to mobilize French companies and expertise.

As this ambitious project enters a key phase, our emotions are certainly high. Who could have imagined, when our agency was founded, how far we would come?

2023 is a pivotal year, with the conclusion of our first mandate – of which we can all be proud.

Since 2018, we have taken decisive steps to make the Nabataean city a cultural capital of the Kingdom. Whether it is the project to create the Villa Hegra, a leading cultural institution dedicated to the arts, the launch of the artist residency program, the creation of the AlUla Peregrina Trading Company, or the revival of the archaeological site of Khaybar, AlUla has kept all its promises as a destination. A strong symbol: Paris is closer to AlUla thanks to the direct flight launched in 2022.

This year, French companies were in the spotlight once again: an ecosystem of innovation (artisans, startups, VSEs, SMEs, and large groups) actively came together to contribute to the advancement of the project. The hotel, restaurant, culture, infrastructure, and security sectors successfully applied the expertise for which French companies are renowned.

This extraordinary project owes a great deal to the partnerships that have supported its development, with conglomerates such as Bouygues Construction, Dassault Systèmes and RATP Dev and major cultural institutions – most recently the Centre Pompidou – as well as numerous small and medium-sized companies and institutions with recognized expertise, such as Archaïos in the field of archaeology and AW2 in the field of architecture and hotel design.

The tremendous momentum of the AIUla project is also the result of close and effective cooperation between the Royal Commission for AIUla and our agency's centers of excellence. Last January, this relationship was further strengthened with the appointment of Sophie Makariou as Scientific Director in charge of AFALULA's Culture and Heritage division.

The arrival of Ferial Fodil, the new CEO of the Villa Hagra, and the selection of the design concept prepared by architecture firm Lacaton & Vassal also mark a new stage in the development of this landmark cultural institution.

I would recall that over these five years, our relationship has been guided by the strong, shared desire

of our two countries to implement the 12 established principles of sustainable development, centered on environmental and ecological preservation, respect for history, regions, and landscapes, and inclusion of the local population. Our common task is to celebrate the unique essence of the place without distorting it.

The project's ambition is equal to the tremendous potential of the region. AIUla is a dream in the heart of the desert. An oasis of culture and hospitality, where ancient history meets modern innovation. To visit AIUla is to experience beauty itself.

I would also like to congratulate all AFALULA's teams on the work they have accomplished and to salute the ever-stronger relationship between ourselves and our Saudi partners. I would also like to share our pride in the commitment of French companies and institutions to the Royal Commission. Together with our Saudi partners, with high standards and great enthusiasm, we are taking the next steps to further grow international awareness of AIUla.

“Our common task is to celebrate the unique essence of AIUla without distorting it.”



“What an incredible journey AFALULA and RCU have embarked on five years ago! Since, the partnership between the Royal Commission for AIUla and AFALULA has proved always more fruitful, resilient and ambitious – to the image of the relationship between France and the Kingdom. Thanks to the intensive work of teams and companies to build together the future of AIUla, the destination has become a benchmark for the rest of the world. AFALULA is ready and eager to get started on the next stages of this unique adventure.”

Laura KWIATOWSKI
General Secretariat
Director Public Affairs &
Institutional Relations



“This year 2023 marks not only 5 years of France's fruitful partnership with the Royal Commission for AIUla, but also the acceleration of the project, which is now fully into its execution phase. It is a source of great pride for the entire AFALULA team to celebrate this major milestone, which projects us collectively into the future, to make AIUla a reference for the Kingdom in terms of cultural, inclusive and sustainable tourism.”

Mathias CURNIER
Chief of Staff
Director Communications,
Marketing, Innovation
& Public Relations





Board of Directors

AS OF 1ST JUNE 2023

ANNE GUEGUEN

Director for
Middle East & North Africa,
French Ministry for Europe
and Foreign Affairs



VINCENT PRINGAULT

Head of Office Turkey, Balkans,
CIS and Middle East,
French Ministry for the Economy,
Finance and Industrial and Digital
Sovereignty



AURÉLIEN LECHEVALIER

Director General of Global Affairs,
Culture, Education & Development
French Ministry for Europe
and Foreign Affairs



MAGALI CESANA

Head of Bilateral Affairs and Business
Internationalisation, General
Directorate of the Treasury
French Ministry for the Economy,
Finance and Industrial and Digital
Sovereignty



GÉRARD MESTRALLET

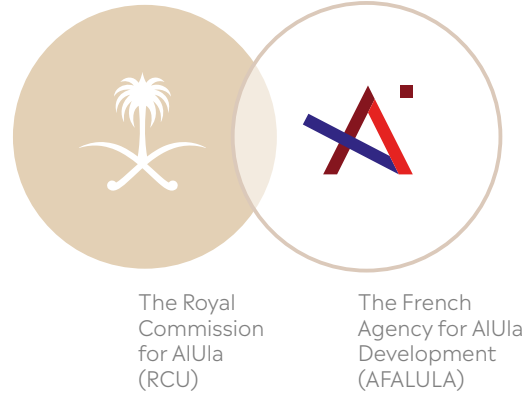
Executive Chairman
of the French Agency
for AIUIa Development
(AFALULA)

Organisation Chart

2022/2023



AFALULA dedicated to AIULA



A TWOFOLD MISSION

TO CO-DEVELOP AND TO MOBILIZE

The Agency's mission is twofold: co-develop the project with the Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU), located in Riyadh and AlUla, and mobilize the full breadth of French expertise (specialists, operators, companies) regarding the project's key fields. Founded in July 2017 and headed by H.R.H. Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom Mohammed bin Salman, the RCU aims at protecting and developing AlUla and promoting its cultural and natural heritage, and its population.

THE BEST OF FRENCH AND INTERNATIONAL KNOW-HOW

The Agency gathers a full range of leading experts in the project's key fields: cultural engineering, archaeology, architecture and urban planning, agriculture and botany, tourism, education, horse, security, water and sustainable environment management.



Eng. Amr Saleh ALMADANI
Chief Executive Officer of the
Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU)



Some flagship projects illustrating the successful Saudi-French cooperation

A MAJOR STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP SIGNED WITH BOUYGUES CONSTRUCTION

On June 7, 2023, in a ceremony at Sharaan Nature Reserve, the Royal Commission for AlUla signed an agreement with the leading French engineering group Bouygues Construction. This major partnership covers the construction management of the Sharaan Resort and International Summit Centre designed by French architect Jean Nouvel in the AlUla Nature Reserve of the same name. Aligned with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 and the Sustainability Charter for AlUla, the Sharaan Resort and International Summit Centre are designed in harmony with the natural environment.





VILLA HEGRA

Several announcements testified this year the considerable progress of this ambitious project: The arrival of Feriel Fodil, the new CEO of the Villa Hegra, and the selection of the design concept prepared by architecture firm Lacaton & Vassal also mark a new stage in the development of this landmark cultural institution.



20-YEAR CELEBRATION OF SAUDI-FRENCH ARCHAEOLOGICAL COOPERATION

Alongside the Saudi Ministry of Culture and the French Embassy, AFALULA and the RCU organised, in the framework of the 20-year celebration of Saudi-French archaeological cooperation, the presentation of AlUla archaeological missions during a symposium in Riyadh, and a one-day field trip in AlUla.



ALULA UNDER THE STARS TV SHOW

On the occasion of the International Francophonie Day, the musical program "AlUla Under the stars" produced by Degel Prod has been broadcasted on TV5MONDE. Filmed live in the Maraya Concert Hall, the event was attended by nearly 500 spectators and brought together audiences and artists in celebration of this cultural encounter through art and song.



THE CENTRE POMPIDOU PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

On March 12, 2023, during the visit to Riyadh and AlUla of the French Minister of Culture, Rima Abdul Malak, a partnership agreement was signed between the RCU and the Centre Pompidou for the creation in AlUla of a Contemporary Art Museum (CAM).

Sustainability at the core of the AlULA project

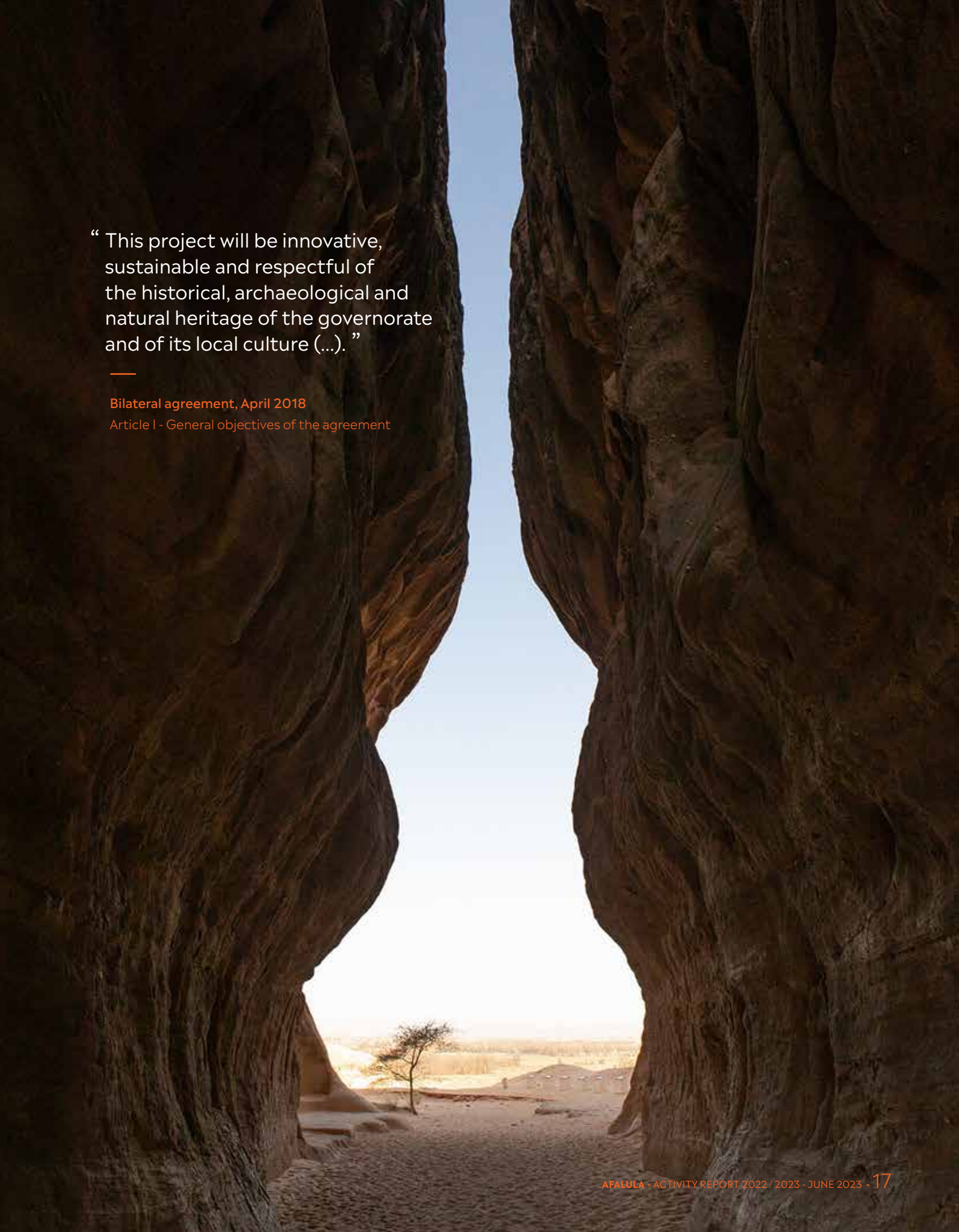
AlULA ambitions to rank amongst
the most iconic developments
internationally in terms of sustainability

KEY SUSTAINABILITY TOPICS IN ALULA

- Water conservation
- Carbon footprint reduction
- Biodiversity protection
- Communities' empowerment
- Balanced socio-economic development

ALULA'S 12 STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES

1. Safeguard the natural and cultural landscape
 2. Heritage, culture, and arts global destination
 3. Sustain ecosystems & wildlife
 4. Balanced agriculture
 5. Light-touch tourism
 6. Subtle connectivity and accessibility
 7. Revitalize, restore and regenerate
 8. Enable the local community
 9. Imaginative infrastructure
 10. Invisible security
 11. Design safe and healthy environments
 12. Embed resilience
-



“ This project will be innovative,
sustainable and respectful of
the historical, archaeological and
natural heritage of the governorate
and of its local culture (...). ”

Bilateral agreement, April 2018

Article I - General objectives of the agreement







Official visits & Committees

“

This year, celebrating the 5-year signing of the intergovernmental agreement by France and Saudi Arabia for the sustainable development of AlUla, was marked by the on-site visits of three French government ministers. Rima Abdul Malak, Minister of Culture, Catherine Colonna, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, and Olivier Becht, Minister for Foreign Trade, Attractiveness and French Nationals Abroad, were invited to discover, alongside AFALULA, the various projects underway in the region. These landmark visits once again demonstrate France's full commitment to this major cooperation project for AlUla's transformation into a leading cultural and tourist destination.

Gérard MESTRALLET,
Executive Chairman of AFALULA

Official visits & Committees



MINISTERIAL VISITS

- **Mr Olivier Becht, Minister for Foreign Trade, Attractiveness and French Nationals Abroad**, visited AIUla: he discovered the region, appreciated the involvement of French organisation in many fields, met with some French experts already working on the project, and with RCU representatives. The Minister oversaw the signature of 3 contracts/MoU (360 Mobility Support, Waste Management Engineering, Landscaping expertise).
- **Mrs Catherine Colonna, French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs**, visited Saudi Arabia and underlined the quality of the partnership between Saudi Arabia and France in AIUla, including during her meeting with HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, Chairman of the Board of the RCU, HH Prince Badr, Governor of the RCU, and Mrs Catherine Colonna signed the amendment to the 2018 intergovernmental agreement, related to the financing of AFALULA.
- **Mrs Rima Abdul Malak, French Minister of Culture**, visited AIUla for a full day: she discovered the region, appreciated first hand the progress made on site in the cultural sector (archaeological sites, artist residencies, Villa Hegra future site, etc.), and met with RCU representatives. During her visit in Riyadh, the Minister met with her counterpart HH Prince Badr, Minister of Culture and Governor of the RCU. They praised the dense cooperation between the two countries in AIUla. Together, they attended the signing of the MoU between the RCU and the Centre Pompidou.



OFFICIAL & BUSINESS DELEGATIONS

- The Agency organised the visit to AIUla of a **delegation of French senior VIPs and Multinational Companies' CEOs**. They learned about the project and had the opportunity to identify possible areas of cooperation with French entities. They will be ambassadors of the project in French business and political circles.
- AFALULA facilitated several **French business delegations**, including in the healthcare, architectural, security, equestrian and airport sectors.
- During the **celebrations of 20 years of Saudi-French cooperation in archaeology**, two members of the AFALULA board, senior officials from the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, visited AIUla and met with RCU officials. They praised the quality of the cooperation and partnership.
- **Interministerial Committee:**
The Saudi Government confirmed the Saudi members of the endowment fund taskforce, as did the French Government. The objective is to present significant progress on the occasion of the next interministerial committee.
- **Endowment fund for heritage:**
The designated members of the endowment fund for heritage taskforce kicked-off their joint work. They are aiming at defining the objectives and governance of the fund.



AFALULA

Achievements & Projects 2022/2023

2023 is a pivotal year, with the conclusion of our first mandate – of which we can all be proud.

Since 2018, we have taken decisive steps to make the Nabataean city a cultural capital of the Kingdom. Whether it is the project to create the Villa Hegra, a leading cultural institution dedicated to the arts, the launch of the artist residency program, or the revival of the archaeological site of Khaybar, AlUla has kept all its promises as a destination.

GENERAL SECRETARIAT

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Major events and ministerial visits of the French Government led to the signing of several partnerships between leading French companies and the RCU. Since 2018, 250 contracts have been signed with 180 French partners in the framework of the AIUla project.

BUSINESS MOBILIZATION

- Contributed to the mobilization of French business ecosystems through seminars/webinars and delegations of French companies to AIUla.
- Organisation of relevant business trips for RCU departments in France. This reinforces direct cooperation between French stakeholders and our Saudi partners.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AFALULA's Board of Directors gathered in AIUla, showing their close commitment to the project on the ground. This was the opportunity to witness the progress on site, and the growing involvement of French experts and companies.

CULTURE & HERITAGE

CULTURAL ASSETS

Kingdoms Institute

The RIBA O (strategic definition) was validated by RCU for the Kingdoms Institute (a global hub for archaeological knowledge and research). In parallel, three experts mandated by AFALULA provided specialist input on the research institute, the laboratories, and the museum galleries. The RIBA 1 deliverables (preparation and briefing enabling the launch of the architectural competition) were then finalised. This work included the project site and design context analysis, the general / functional / technical / environmental program, and the museographic brief. These documents were informed by the strategic documents delivered by the experts mobilised by AFALULA.

In collaboration with Archaeology

PARTNER: EMBASE

Museum of the Incense Road

AFALULA participated in meetings of the Cultural Museums Expert Panel to define the narrative content; and in the jury to select the architect of the Museum of the Incense Road. *In collaboration with Botanical Products and Architecture & Urban development*



Contemporary Art Museum

Facilitated the signature of a MoU between the RCU and the Centre Pompidou steered by French and Saudi Ministers of Culture. Currently participating in the finalisation of the partnership in areas such as: cultural & scientific project, collection exchange, sharing expertise, capacity building and training, governance, financial & operating model, infrastructure and venue management. AFALULA organised the first onsite mission with the Centre Pompidou management team.

PARTNER: CENTRE POMPIDOU

Black Basalt Museum

Relaunched the Black Basalt Museum project in support of RCU Wildlife and Natural Heritage team. Revisited the concept initially drafted at the beginning of the project in order to better align with the enhanced vision. *In collaboration with Agriculture*

Arabian Horse Heritage Museum

On RCU's behalf, the Culture & Heritage team assumes the scientific lead of the project, developing the curatorial and collections approach. The ambition of the museum, the 1st of its kind, is to celebrate the glorious legacy of the Arabian horse and the unique equestrian culture of Islam. A truly living museum it will mix indoor galleries with outdoor experiences within the AlAttheeb Equestrian Village. *In collaboration with Equestrian Projects*

AFALULA participated in the jury to select the architects for the Contemporary Art Museum, and for the Dadan and Jabal Ikmah visitor centers.

In collaboration with Architecture & Urban development



SITE MANAGEMENT

AFALULA supported the RCU Site Management team in the preparation of Tayma and Khaybar opening to the public. AFALULA experts provided advice on the visitor experience, and on the conservation of the site.

CULTURAL RETAIL

Copiloted a 7-week study on cultural retail trading strategy, involving RMN (Réunion des Musées Nationaux, French cultural public organisation running 34 cultural retail outlets in France and abroad), including onsite visits and workshops. Following the completion of the study, a strategic note and business plan was delivered to facilitate alignment with all stakeholders. One of the outcomes was the proposal to create a separate trading entity devoted to retail.

PARTNER: RMN



ALULA WONDER OF ARABIA EXHIBITION

Following joint efforts and discussions with the relevant authorities in China, the exhibition AlUla Wonder of Arabia is confirmed to take place in the Forbidden City in Beijing. It will be co-organised with AFALULA in the West Pavilion of the South Gate, starting in December 2023 to Spring 2024. Updated AV content and scenography. Updated catalogue in English, Arabic and Chinese.

ALULA PERSPECTIVES MAGAZINE

A prototype was delivered, proposing the concept of AlUla Perspectives magazine, a targeted international cultural/arts publication. The objective is to communicate on the 'destination built by artists', prefiguring the opening of the future institutions, and to present the points of view of scientists, researchers, architects, creatives involved in the project. In collaboration with Communication & Public Relations



ARTS AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

- **Art Strategic Initiatives:** contributing to the 2023 iteration of AlUla Design Awards & related event and exhibition during the Paris Design Week. Organised an AlUla onsite mission with Paris Design Week CEO.
- **Art in the landscape:** participated in the Envisioning Sustainability Summit as a prefiguration of Wadi AlFann. Currently working on contribution for the 2023 iteration.
- **Collection & Acquisition:** facilitated the acquisition of 3 artworks from the 2021/2022 Oasis Reborn acquisitions and currently pitching 2022/2023 artworks for Contemporary Art Museum's collection or other assets.
- **Outreach and international platform:** contributed to the project visibility and organised presentation/talk during Art Dubai.
- **Other projects:** contributed to technical evaluations for projects such as Madrasat Addeera; delivered NFT project strategy, scope of work and details for vendor recruitment and leading curatorial stream; finalised and delivered full program for the Francophonie week including the creation of large-scale operatic performance Nahara – postpone.

ARCHAEOLOGY



ON THE FIELD

- All archaeological missions steered by AFALULA - Khaybar, Old Town (MUDUD), Oasis (UCOP, Geoarchaeology and Archaeobotanic projects), Dadan - worked on the field for up to 8 months. The teams peaked at 120+ experts. The missions continued their work in their respective laboratories and research centers, to analyse the samples collected during their last mission.
- As part of the archaeological missions, 20 to 30 Saudi students were trained onsite, alongside world renowned Saudi and French specialists. They will be the next generation of Saudi archaeological experts.
- Completed the data collection and the analysis for the Dadan conservation plan with CRATerre (documentation; condition assessment of all archaeological features considered as elements in their landscape context; identification of priority interventions). Aligned on the strategy to complete the conservation plan.

PARTNERS: CNRS, SORBONNE UNIVERSITY, ARCHAÏOS

MAJOR EVENTS

Dadan colossus at the Musée du Louvre

With AFALULA's support, displayed the colossal statue discovered on Dadan site in the Musée du Louvre in Paris, for a period of 5 years renewable. This enables operational discussions to explore further opportunities for cooperation between the Near Eastern Antiquities Department, RCU and AFALULA.

PARTNERS: CNRS, MUSÉE DU LOUVRE



International Scientific Congresses

The archaeological teams participated in the annual Seminar of Arabian Studies (SAS) in Berlin and in the International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East (ICAANE) in Copenhagen. Works in AIUla were valued in the scientific community through several papers presented and to be published.

20 years of Saudi-French archaeological cooperation celebration:

Alongside the Saudi Ministry of Culture and the French Embassy, AFALULA and RCU organised the presentation of AIUla archaeological missions during a symposium in Riyadh, and a one-day field trip in AIUla on the heritage sites researched as part of the Saudi-French cooperation. This was the opportunity to showcase the best practices, results and discuss future cooperation opportunities with Saudi and French experts & authorities

PARTNERS: CNRS, SORBONNE UNIVERSITY, ARCHAÏOS



Conference

The two co-directors of the Dadan Archaeological Project presented, in a conference in Le Musée du Louvre, their fieldwork research and the statue displayed in the Oriental section of the museum. 300 people attended the event; social media abundantly relayed the event.

PARTNERS: CNRS, MUSEE DU LOUVRE

Expert Panel

Contributed to the first Heritage Expert Panel meeting in AIUla, gathering Saudi and international experts in the field of Archaeology and Heritage.

VIP visits

The scientists and researchers onsite prepared and allocated time for several VIP visits, including the French Minister of Culture.



French expertise

Facilitated a training session on storage and specific collections for RCU colleagues, with the support of the Musée du Louvre, and visits to National Museum of Natural History and Musée du Quai Branly-Jacques Chirac.



ARCHITECTURE & URBAN DEVELOPMENT

PLANNING

- AFALULA is actively involved in the development of the « Socio-economic initiatives program » for AIUla. The program aims to improve the quality of life for the people of AIUla with 3 key components:
 1. A Community Development Roadmap of spatial and non spatial interventions for the local community;
 2. A set of policies to enable an inclusive housing strategy and rural upgrading initiatives;
 3. A set of sectoral plans to leverage and unlock AIUla's economic potential.The final delivery is expected for Q2 2023.

- Assessed and provided feedbacks on AIUla Central & South Masterplan, leading to a workshop held in Dubaï with RCU & Atkins.
- Participated in the working group dedicated to future urban regulations (Zoning Plan).
- Contributed to the framing, and initial deliverable assessments, of the newly launched Masterplans: Quhr plain/ Mugayrah/Abu Zaraib, and Harrat Uwarid. This included in particular a full update on water status.

PARTNERS: PRIOR & PARTNERS,
ATKINS, DAR, WATG, ARUP, WSP,
JACOBS, MT PLANNERS

CULTURAL OASIS DISTRICT

As part of the Cultural Oasis District design, assessed the Dadan & Jabal Ikma Concept Masterplan (Preliminary Masterplan, Stage 2) and contributed to the Masterplan design, including the Old Town, AlJadidah frontage and oasis.

CONSTRUCTION SUPPLY CHAIN STRATEGY

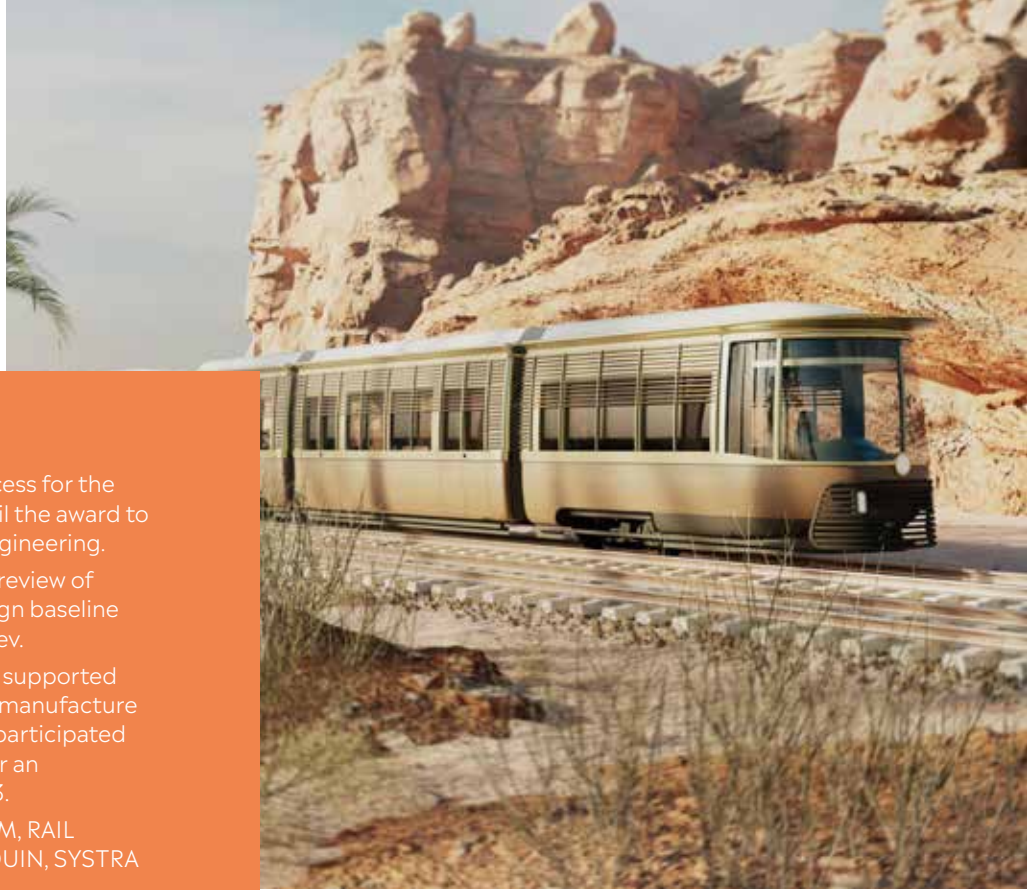
Identified the critical risks on the construction delivery, and mitigation measures, in terms of material supply, construction logistics and contractors & resources. Designed the scope of work, led the consultant's work, participated in interviews with RCU stakeholders and potential industrial partner; all the way to the conclusion and proposed next steps. *In collaboration with Environment & Infrastructures*



ALULA TRAM

- Supported the procurement process for the Tram Lead Designer's mission until the award to Systra, French leader in railway engineering.
- Participated in the follow-up and review of studies while developing the design baseline and station program with RATP Dev.
- Designed the future rolling stock, supported the procurement process for the manufacture of rolling stock and systems, and participated in the technical analysis of bids for an award scheduled for the Q3 2023.

PARTNERS: SETEC-EGIS-ASSYSTEM, RAIL CONCEPT, RATP DEV, PATRICK JOUIN, SYSTRA



ARCHITECTURE DESIGN DELEGATION

Co-organised the visit to AlUla of a delegation set-up by Business France and AFEX (French Architects Association for Export), with over 20 French architectural firms. They got the opportunity to visit and understand the region, its challenges, and to meet with RCU representatives, with a view to developing further cooperation.

PARTNERS: BUSINESS FRANCE, AFEX



SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainable Construction

Supported the implementation of the Sustainable Construction action Plan including co-piloting with RCU:

- The green buildings certification project to confirm the most relevant labels to meet the AlUla Sustainability agenda. Additional minimum requirements are under development for specific target (CO2, Water & Energy) – Alpin;
- The AlUla specific Climate responsive building guidelines to disseminate best practices for passive design and resilient housing typologies - AESG;
- The LBM strategy (phase 1) which aims to ease access to local building materials to support CO2 reduction in construction and boost local economy development - Egis.

Local Building Materials

Experimental Lab co-prepared and attended the kick-off meeting for the Local Building Materials Experimental Lab. The objective is to launch a center of excellence in earthen architecture and sustainable construction.

Wadi AlFann workshop

Attended and contributed to the Wadi AlFann sustainability workshop 'Envisioning Sustainability Symposium'. The objective was to explore the challenges presented in the development of Wadi AlFann as a sustainable and environmentally responsible destination.

PARTNERS: EGIS, ALPIN, AESG, MC DONOUGH INNOVATION

TOURISM & HOSPITALITY

ALULA PROMOTION

PARTNER: INTERFACE TOURISM

Press

- A partnership with 'Elle' magazine (10 million readers per month) was deployed in September, with a first article published in the paper version, a longer article on the web version, and Instagram post+story.

Press trips

- Co-organised the 1-week AIUla press trip for 'Paris Match' – French-language weekly news magazine, founded in 1949 and ranked #1 magazine in terms of readership (over 500k prints weekly), it covers major national and international news along with celebrity lifestyle features.
- Organised a press trip, with 4 French journalists (Grazia, Lonely Planet, Biba, Voyage-Voyage).
- AFALULA supported the visit to AIUla of 6 French journalists, part of 2 press trips: Saudi Tour (Le Monde), AIUla Arts Festival (Le Monde, Le Figaro, AD Magazine, Connaissance des Arts).
- Organised 2 press trips for both Le Figaro Histoire and Le Figaro Magazine, 2 major high-end cultural magazines, providing 2 articles (10 pages and 9 pages).

As part of the promotional activities in France, about 412 articles (print+ digital) mentioning AIUla were published in the French medias in 2022, representing 750 million cumulated readers, more than twice the number in 2021.

Following the pilot run with AFALULA, RCU subscribed to TravelSat: a French platform enabling the collection and analysis of visitors' reviews on the main tourism apps and websites.



Fam'trip

Co-organised a 'fam'trip' (familiarisation trip) for 4 luxury Tour Operators in AIUla. It focussed on offers for high-net-worth visitors.

Promotional web conference

Organised with Interface Tourism 3 web conferences on AIUla dedicated to the Travel trade which gathered totally more than 100 representatives of French TOs.

Strategic partnerships

Two marketing partnerships were launched with 2 major French Tour Operators (Intermèdes, Les Maisons du Voyage). Their objectives are to support the operators' promotional activities for AIUla.



Promotional Events

- Organised a workshop in Paris, in the presence of 5 AIUla tourism providers, and 32 French Tour Operators. The outcome was direct contacts with providers, for future opportunities.
- Participated in the Renaissance Workshop in Paris for luxury tour operators and travel agencies (11 of them met with the AIUla team). The format, one-to-one meetings, was conducive to direct contacts.
- Participated in the annual ADONET meeting, which creates a forum to meet tourism and travel journalists one-to-one.
- Together with 'Les Maisons du Voyage', participated in a meeting dedicated to AIUla, and targeting their top clients.
- Participated in "A World for Travel Forum" event. A 2-day conference and workshops dedicated to the future of tourism held in Nîmes. Presence of high-level leaders from both institutional and private sectors from the tourism industry and 60 international media. Phillip Jones, Chief Tourism Officer at the RCU, had the opportunity to present the AIUla project as a case study and during a roundtable. Attendance : 400 participants + 60,000 online.
- Organised at IMA the private screening of the Nat Geo documentary "The lost treasures of Arabia - the ancient city of Dadan" followed by a roundtable with 4 experts. This event gathered 160 VIPs and attendees interested in travel, archaeology and ancient history.

Digital campaigns

- Carried out a new digital campaign for the promotion of the Paris-AIUla direct flight, in partnership with 3 French tour operators (Directours, Eluxtravel, Les Maisons du Voyage).
- Promoted the Paris CDG-AIUla direct flight on Saudia, through a targeted digital campaign, numerous actions (newsletter, press release, etc.)

Paris-AIUla direct flight

Sixteen flights, directly connecting Paris to AIUla, were operated by Saudia during the season. Thanks to these flights, a total of 1,283 passengers flew directly from CDG airport, more than 3x the last season's figure.

VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Delivered a benchmark study of the different services to be provided to visitors in Visitor centres.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

- **Hospitality:** Developed a proposed Action Plan for hotel operations sustainability. The proposal was based on the main sustainability topics in terms of hotels operations (water, waste, food waste, single-use items, energy).

SECURITY & SAFETY

SECURITY

- Support on demand to different RCU Security operations.
- Support in upgrading and maintenance of existing security and safety infrastructure within different heritage sites and RCU assets.
- Mobilization of the French expertise and companies to support the deployment by RCU of multiple security, safety and critical communication systems.
PARTNERS: THALES, CRONOS CONSEIL, HGH INFRARED SYSTEMS, AZUR DRONES
- Development of a "Security Governance Model for AIUla".
PARTNER: CIVIPOL

HEALTHCARE

- Through AFALULA, an emergency medical team for guests supported the healthcare coverage of the destination, during the AIUla Season. This support was extended, with the French experts Amarante and Iris Conseil Santé, with a view to ensure a continued service.
- Completed the healthcare strategic review and facility design for the private hospital in AIUla.
PARTNERS : AMARANTE, IRIS CONSEIL SANTÉ

EQUESTRIAN PROJECTS

AL ATHEEB

Carried out a benchmarking study to frame the future work of the consultant and his multi experts who will be in charge of the RIBA 0 and RIBA 1 missions (Strategic definition & Brief) - horse heritage complex, which will include an immersive experience, a museum, a riding school, a furusiyya academy, horse boarding facilities, equestrian tourism services, hospitality services, horse-mounted rangers, etc.

AFALULA assisted RCU in defining the RFP's scope of work, supported by the strategic study for Al Atheeb. Having contributed to the analysis of bids for the appointment of the firm that will develop the RIBA 0 & 1 mission, AFALULA remains at the side of RCU in the steering of the project. In this sense, the Scientific

Committee was proposed and will oversee the programming of the museum. It involves 7 French experts amongst the 10 members. At the request of RCU, AFALULA's Scientific Director was invited to be acting curatorial lead for the asset and launch the curatorial and collections plan. *In collaboration with Architecture & Urban development and Culture & Heritage*

AL MOATADIL

AFALULA contributed to the finalisation of Phase 1 Masterplan Design for AlMoatadil (322ha development, envisioned as a mixed-use village with equestrian, agriculture and culture components). Contributed to the development of RIBA 2 of AlMoatadil equestrian village, as a member of the multidisciplinary working group (RCU/AFALULA). *In collaboration with Architecture & Urban development*

EQUESTRIAN TRAINING

Facilitated the signing of a framework agreement between RCU and AFASEC (French equestrian sector school). Subsequently, AFASEC designed a proposed training programme for grooms and farriers. *In collaboration with Human Capital*
PARTNER: AFASEC

EQUESTRIAN TOURISM

Extreme International developed outdoor activities approach for AlUla, which includes equestrian tourism as one of its pillars, based in AlAtheeb. AFALULA introduced French specialized tour operator, 'Cheval d'Aventure', which will support the activation, and ensure full consistency with the overall strategy. *In collaboration with Tourism & Hospitality*
PARTNER: CHEVAL D'AVENTURE





EQUESTRIAN SECTOR GUIDELINES

With 'Conseil des Chevaux de Normandie' (Normandy Horse council), completed the first equestrian guidelines (temporary and permanent stables, breeding) and additional inputs on Equestrian Tourism; more will be delivered.

PARTNER: CONSEIL DES CHEVAUX DE NORMANDIE



EQUESTRIAN DELEGATION

AFALULA invited a high-level equestrian sector delegation to the 2023 Fursan Endurance Race, in AlUla. The delegation included 2 former French Ministers, the Mayor of Deauville (one of the equestrian capital cities in Europe), as well as specialist journalists and experts. This was the opportunity to increase the awareness of AlUla as an equestrian destination, as well as build new connections in the sector between Saudi Arabia and France.



EQUESTRIAN EXPERTISE

- Contributed to the onboarding of the new RCU equestrian team members.
- Supported RCU's attendance to the Business France's led 'French Equestrian Symposium'. This Saudi-French event, held in Riyadh, gathered the key players in the sector in Saudi Arabia, together with a delegation of visiting French experts.
- Supported the procurement process on equestrian international competition events organisation, as well as on the infrastructures for those events.

HUMAN CAPITAL



ICTH

FERRANDI Paris CEO met with RCU CEO and team to align on the strategic goals for ICTH (International College for Tourism and Hospitality), beyond the existing programme. This will set the path for the project at large, including the opening of the AIUla campus. Supported the procurement process to select the ICTH operator. The selected organisation will run the school in line with the knowledge partner, FERRANDI Paris, quality standards and guidelines. ICTH business owner coming to France in June to visit several FERRANDI Campus (Paris, Dijon). Follow-up of the project within the framework of the working group for the Villa Hegra cluster.

PARTNER: FERRANDI PARIS

HOSPITALITY

Upon request from RCU, AFALULA gathered 6 proposals from best culinary arts and hospitality management schools, to complete the training for 12 students from AIUla.

ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP

A group of 10 students from INALCO (renowned National Institute of Eastern Languages and Civilisations) stayed in AIUla for one month. Their programme included Arabic language classes at the AIUla Languages Institute (ULI), job internship in several RCU departments, and cultural exchanges with the local community. This pilot will serve to design the RCU future students exchange programme.

PARTNER: INALCO



SITE MANAGEMENT

A team of 6 experts from CMN (Centre des Monuments Nationaux) carried out an evaluation of guides/rawat skills. This included an assessment of the 15 staff who had followed a training in France last Summer, mystery visits, and interviews. They took the opportunity to deliver a targeted training session, and an interactive workshop. Following their evaluation of guides/rawat skills mission in AIUla at the end of 2022, the CMN designed and proposed 3 targeted training programmes for the guides, rangers, and for training of trainers. In collaboration with Culture & Heritage
PARTNER: CMN





COUNTY OPS CAPACITY BUILDING

Territorial and administrative management experts carried out a mission in AIUla to interview 50 staff from the County Operations team and drew an all-encompassing capacity programme. This initiative of skills needs analysis may also serve as a good practice of knowledge transfer for other sectors. *In collaboration with Environment & Infrastructures*

PERFUME CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

AFALULA pre-selected, mobilised, and designed with ISIPCA (top ranking perfume school based in Versailles, originally created by Guerlain 50 years ago) a capacity building programme in the field of perfume and flavours. Modverre (main supplier of the perfume industry) finalised its detailed proposal to equip the Madrasat Addeera laboratory for perfume trainings. These activities will be run by ISIPCA. *In collaboration with Botanical Products*

PARTNER: ISIPCA



SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

- Accompanied the visit of Campus France CEO to AIUla. This was the opportunity to strengthen the partnership and consider future areas of collaboration (e.g. student fair).
- AFALULA supported the scholarship programme run by RCU and Campus France and facilitated the placement of students for internships in well-established French companies in France, including: RATP Dev (mobility), AW2 (architecture), INRAE (agronomy), LOHR (logistics manufacturing), ARCHAÏOS (archaeology).
- Designed a full proposal for post-diploma training, to enhance the scholarship students' employability. **PARTNER: CAMPUS FRANCE**

SPORTS

- The detached staff from AFALULA started her 6-month secondment to the RCU Sports team. In addition, AFALULA drafted 3 proposals to deepen the cooperation in the sports sector: on sports equipment and academies, on sports events for the community, and on potential partnership with a French football club (through French Professional League).



- AFALULA team led a mission to Monaco and Nice for the RCU Sports team. During this visit, focused on tennis and football, various academies and infrastructures were visited, including the first tennis academy in Europe (the prestigious Mouratougou Academy) as well as a visit of the AS Monaco performance and training center. A successful mission that will lead to future projects and emblematic cooperations in AIUla.

ALULA JOB FAIR

Mobilised French organisations operating in AIUla to contribute to the job fair targeting the local population. Several of them advertised local jobs, two French companies participated directly, as well as APTC - AIUla Peregrina Trading Company, supported by AFALULA.

ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURES



LOCAL GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC SERVICES

Laying the foundations of AIUla local government

- Contributed to the preliminary design of the governance, organisation and economics of the future municipality of AIUla.
- Supported the preparation of the Land Management Department strategy and roll-out plan.
- Co-steered the efforts to define the county planning process (from strategic planning to operational planning) and assess the corresponding organisational options.
- Specified the key profiles to be recruited (Social, Economic and Infrastructure Planning Leads, Codes & Standards Director)
- Designed a leadership capacity-building dedicated to the leadership team of County Operations.

PARTNERS: SITTAÉ/CAMINNO, NODALIS, SCARABEUS

Strengthening infrastructure cycle in AIUla

- Facilitated the extension of support by the French consortium Egis-Setec-Assystem to lead the infrastructure development programme over the next 10 years.
- Prepared the participation of the RCU Infrastructure Development Director at the Infraweek event taking place in Paris. Organised interview with AGEFI (leading media), and meetings with key infrastructure players.
- Supported County Operations in their quality of infrastructure owner and service regulator.

PARTNERS: SETEC, EGIS, ASSYSTEM (SEA)

Fly me-et

- Attended the Airport Symposium organised by Business France in Riyadh where RCU senior executives set out its development programme for AIUla airport and expressed their expectations, alongside major Saudi stakeholders, to 15+ French major organisations of the sector. Specific contacts were made, for possible future cooperation.





Mobility

- Supported the signing of a contract '360 Mobility Plan' between RCU and RATP Dev to define and implement a comprehensive mobility strategy for the AIUla county, from public transport to micro mobility options. Co-designed the governance and participated in its implementation, with thorough onboarding of the stakeholders involved.
- Facilitated the signature of the framework agreement between RCU and RATP Dev on mobility operations, paving the way to the preparation of the next season, and future operations.
- Supported progress on the Electric Vehicles strategy and action plan, including the electric vehicle charging infrastructures.
- Organised visits to electric buses and autonomous vehicles manufacturing sites in France, in preparation for the touristic season 2023/24 (Gaussin- Olloré, Lohr, Eaysmile).
- Contributed to the autonomous pod demonstrator in the Old Town.
- As part of the initial agreement signed with RATP Dev, under the auspices of AFALULA, 6 autonomous vehicles operators recruited in the local population were trained by RATP Dev. This is the first step of a broader recruitment and training programme.

PARTNER: RATP DEV

ENVIRONMENT - POLICIES, ORGANISATION & ACTIONS

Rooting the Environmental Sustainability roadmap in action

- RCU and AFALULA worked on the consolidation of a global program management on Environmental Sustainability. Supported the priority setting process and the monitoring of the corresponding action plan (priorities, organisation, budget), approved by RCU leadership.
- Jointly defined the environmental functions of RCU and co-designed the corresponding organisational structure.
- Supported the review and finalisation of environmental guidelines for construction solid waste, nature-based flood mitigation strategy, temporary activation upcycling, and alternate utilities.
- Contributed to evaluation of bids for the Environmental Compliance Assurance Programme, which will be key to ensure the implementation of environmental guidelines across AIUla County, namely on construction sites.
- Supported the review of the implementation of Environmental Sustainability Pilot Project-Phase 1 for the Resource Management Park.
- Contributed to the completion of expert

ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURES



mission to build a 'carbon control tower' that monitors progress of carbon abatement initiatives, with a reporting dashboard.

- Participated in visits of potential sites for the future solar farm, with the Ministry of Energy, County Planning and Film Studio teams. Contributed to the RfP aiming at identifying land suitable to the Ministry of Energy for the solar farm development.

Toward sustainable waste management practices

- Supported County Operations, through Amane Advisors' expertise in integrated solid waste operations and policies.
- Contributed to the strengthening of the technical requirements for the resource recovery value-chain (circular economy) namely for construction and organic waste. This led to the pre-launch for the tender, for which AFALULA contributed to mobilise international leading players.
- Contributed to finalising and launching the ESIA (Environmental

Impact Assessment) for the existing dump site. This is a pre-requisite for sound waste management in AIUla.

- Supported joint discussions with Regulations department on required municipal solid waste policies and regulations resulting in a proper plan.
- Promoted the launch of the holistic approach to solid waste management that will ensure integrated solid waste management strategy and enhancement of local circular economy.

PARTNER: AMANE ADVISORS

Geospatial intelligence to better understand and depict activities in AIUla

- Jointly worked on the definition of the concept, implementation principles and 4 first use cases for the AIUla Urban & Environment Observatory.
- Contributed to create a geohazard map at county scale, with the support of BRGM (Bureau de Recherches Géologiques et Minières), to identify local building material resources, to assess risks in development areas and serve as reference for all developers.

- Contributed to the design of Weather, Air Quality and Climate Change platform for AIUla in line with national ambition developed by NCEC. The platform will cover weather forecasts, climate change, advanced surveillance and monitoring of winds, particles, noise, odours and light pollution.
- Joint efforts were made to find a change detection solution to ensure the ongoing monitoring of all physical changes occurring on the ground e.g. roads, constructions, fences, illegal waste dumping areas, etc. Potential solutions using satellite images and AI algorithms were devised at Thales Satellite Factory in Cannes (France) and successfully tested.
- Presented the drone management platform from Thales. Drones are currently the only way to properly cover all the county.

PARTNERS: THALES, SUEZ-ARIA, BRGM



INTELLIGENT COUNTY ALULA

Smart County: now ready for large scale deployments

- Hosted a 4-day symposium on Smart County in Paris, with 20+ participants from all RCU departments and Digital partners (incl. Thales, 3Ds) to inform and align on vision and implementation of AIUla Smart County.
- Supported the implementation of the Smart County Platform (SCP), now running on the Nour Net KSA cloud. Contributed to the following achievements: 1) SCP governance approved 2) Global Technical Detailed Design of AIUla Smart County validated (the reference framework to deploy more than 200 use cases over the next years).
- Participated in the initial steps to build a Command-and-Control Centre "Integrated Operational Center" (IoC) to support both Security and Municipality Operations. Delivered highly scalable critical operational capabilities with real time tracking. First cases: autonomous pod, and grey water transportation, incident and issues management with first version of Fixmystreet app.

Laying the technical foundations of AIUla's Digital Twin and initiating its adoption

- Jointly developed 4 use cases that showcase the added value of the Digital Twin by 3Ds as a single source of truth and create a foundation for a rapid adoption and deployment. A full Dadan village Digital Twin was set up and completed, enabling a collaborative validation of the Masterplan.
- Defined the process and the expected benefits of working with a Digital Twin for Planning, hence serving MP2 operationalisation (clash management, information sharing, online visualization).
- Jointly contributed to define and showcase an Archaeology Heritage Digital twin enabling better collaboration between archaeologists, heritage experts, contractors, planners, whilst protecting the Intellectual property of researchers.
- Achieved the first High Definition Virtual Reality navigation in the Old Town for professionals and visitors (e.g. simulation of building restauration).

- Contributed to the implementation of Digital Twin Technical layer on Oracle KSA cloud, the cornerstone for a cloud IT infrastructure.
- Got heavily involved in the design of the first Digital Enterprise Architecture for AIUla (integration principles, Smart Data codes, Smart County Platform and Data management platform). Objectives are to reduce overlaps, to build for scalability and seamless data management. This was done in cooperation with French experts from Thales and Artefact.

PARTNERS: THALES, DASSAULT SYSTEMS, ARTEFACT

BOTANICAL PRODUCTS

MORINGA PEREGRINA

- Despite an unfavourable season and weather, the 21 tons target of pure Peregrina seeds purchase was reached, with a quality level above expectations (97% vs. planned 90%) – 129 farmers, including 63 recently enrolled ones, contributed to the success.
- UEBT (Union for Ethical BioTrade) confirmed the responsibly sourced certification for the AIUla Peregrina supply chain. This is critical for commercialisation of the products.
- Patents for extracts in cosmetic and pharmaceuticals are being deployed internationally and have been granted in Europe, Israël, Australia, China and several other countries.
- The work on the farmers cultivation improvement was kicked-off. This will lead to an increased value for the farmers as suppliers to APTC (AIUla Peregrina Trading Company), and improvements on the UEBT (Union of Ethical BioTrade) scoring.

- A commercial contract was signed with a major international luxury client for the AIUla Peregrina oil. The luxury consumer-products, based on AIUla Peregrina oil, will be launched on the international market at the fall of 2023. Over 95% of the initial production was purchased.
- Banyan Tree AIUla has bought its first batch of 5 AIUla Peregrina amenity products, 100% natural and made in KSA and has shown interest in extending the partnership to spa products. Habitas hotel has confirmed its interest to procure Peregrina-based amenities from the APTC company.

Representatives from the APTC company, including a young Saudi technician hired in the local community, were present with a booth at the InCosmetics trade fair in Barcelona. 250 contacts were made and, more particularly, 20 qualified leads were activated amongst the largest flavours and ingredients groups and distributors.

PERFUME LAB IN MADRASAT ADDEERA

Finalised the plan and all equipment and costing needed to install a fragrances and flavour lab in the Madrasat Addeera.

PERFUME & COSMETIC DEVELOPMENT

Organised a one-week mission to AIUla for a perfumer and a sourcer; including field visits and sampling of local plants, both cultivated and indigenous. The objective was to identify new ingredients and products that can be based on AIUla plants.



PARTNERS: CARE, EPHYLA





NURSERY & LANDSCAPING

- **Nursery:** Further refined the future nursery business plan, including the separation between RCU's own needs and needs of external development projects. Also, finalised the technical specifications of the agricultural part of the nursery project. Set up an experts' consortium to support RCU Nursery business owner in the design and construction phases.

In collaboration with Agriculture

- **Horticulture:** Launched the work on the 3rd edition of the landscaping native plants catalogue. This will serve as the reference book both for the nursery, and landscapers and developers.
- Organised and lead the mission of plant shooting with a professional photographer (nursery; landscaped sites; wilderness). The objective was to enrich the Wildlife and Natural Heritage photo bank for VVIP editions and communication. The shooting included examples of landscaping projects lead by the RCU horticulture department. *In collaboration with Communication & Public Relations*

PARTNERS: VALORHIZ, APEXAGRI, DOMAINES AGRICOLES

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL HERITAGE

- Provided expertise in the monitoring of the 3-year Sharaan Regeneration project, the new GIS system on Wildlife & Natural Heritage, and the ethnobotanical book on AIUla Flora.

PARTNER: VALORHIZ

- Provided expertise on the scoping of projects (e.g. standard specifications for landscape construction projects manual in AIUla county; governance of native tree species classes at AIUla), as well as on key initiatives programming (e.g. landscape department; plant nursery & seed bank department).
- AFALULA expert supported the ecological compensation project: implementing biodiversity net gain framework guideline.



ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

Provided expertise support to the ESIA (Environmental Impact Assessment), including on the Tram project.

RCU DELEGATION

Organised a set of visits and meetings in Paris for 4 representatives of the Wildlife & Natural Heritage department of the RCU. They included the Herbarium at the Paris Museum of Natural History, the archaeobotany department involved in the researches in AIUla, SoFunLand (soil research) genetic laboratory at the same museum.

In collaboration with Agriculture



AGRICULTURE

CITRUS VALUE-CHAIN DEVELOPMENT

The High Value Citrus for AIUla (HVC) Project entered its last year of implementation (closing in December 2023). Accordingly, 4 missions were completed between October 2022 and March 2023, cumulating about 300 persons/day in AIUla. This allowed the following:

- The imports of 35 new varieties of citrus, which were grafted in the nursery leading to about 300 trees that will be ready for dissemination in farms by early 2024;
- The dissemination of 11 local AIUla varieties and 24 imported varieties (previously grafted in the nursery) replanted in the Citrus Arboretum (42 young trees) of the Cultural Oasis district and in 2 commercial farms for field trials;
- Trials on rootstocks continued in the nursery, to assess which one could be best adapted to AIUla context for oranges and kumquats production.
- The AIUla Orchards screening for pests and diseases was completed. Over 80 farms randomly selected from the whole AIUla county were tested against 20 diseases and pests, demonstrating that AIUla is free from the major EU-quarantine diseases.
- Five (5) trainings were organised, gathering over 50 farmers and value-chains stakeholders. They covered different citrus-related topics, including irrigation, citrus harvest and post-harvest practices and tree pruning;
- The second season of the AIUla navel orange (Abusora) monitoring programme was completed with 30 selected farms, being sampled every 2 weeks for quality control (colour, juice content, ratio acidity / sugar). The analyses of juices (sugar/acidity ratio) from over 2,000 navel oranges was undertaken and the results will be shared with farmers to help them understanding the best harvesting time;
- The preparation of the January 2023 Citrus Festival: visit of nurseries in Riyadh and Tayma to select trees to be displayed, logistics of citrus diversity presentation, cooking demonstration.
- A study tour was organised in Corsica for an RCU delegation to visit the Citrus Centre for Biological Resources (CIRAD/INRAE), the citrus collection (over 1,000 varieties of citrus in open fields) and germplasm (genetical pool), and to meet with value-chain stakeholders involved in the Geographical Protected Indication (GPI) label and "Corsica Grana" brand of local wild plants production for perfumes and cosmetics. This was the opportunity to understand models of agriculture governance in rural areas, observe innovative technologies and equipment (sorting, packing and processing machines).

PARTNERS: CIRAD, INRAE,
AGROPROSPECTIVE, MAS
BACHÈS, ANSES





The High-Value Citrus for AIUla Project accompanied the organisation of the Citrus Festival 2023 by:

- Bringing two renowned international Chefs (the Michelin-starred Chef William Ledeuil and the Pastry Chef Keiko Nagae) to manage live-cooking sessions around citrus products during the festival. Six young AIUla female chefs were trained to support the Chefs during the sessions and fruits and vegetables produced in the Oasis were sourced locally by the Chefs for the culinary preparations;
- Organising and running a Citrus Variety exhibition stand where over 90 varieties of Citrus from AIUla and the world were displayed. Two young men from AIUla were trained as experts to hold the stand and provide explanations to the visitors;
- A 4-hand diner was held at the Banyan Tree Saffron Restaurant, with Ricardo Lujan (Banyan Tree AIUla Chef) and William Ledeuil, demonstrating that locally produced vegetables and fruits (including citrus) from the oasis and local farms can already be used in high-end gastronomy.

PARTNERS: MAS BACHÈS, ARÔME PARIS, WILLIAM LEDEUIL



Innovation

Different varieties of citrus were sampled during the winter season and through laboratory analysis, promising activities were identified for the local "thoroungue" (citron)'s albedo (inner layer of citrus peel). More detailed studies were launched, likely to lead to new patents.

PARTNERS: NISSACTIVE, CARE

AGRICULTURE



LIVESTOCK SECTOR

- The *AIUla Livestock Sector scoping and action plan* project was conducted during the second half of 2022. For the first time, reliable data and information (operation of the existing slaughterhouse, livestock owners' practices, etc.) on this sector in AIUla were gathered and analysed during three consecutive missions. The findings were presented to the RCU and a workshop gathering livestock stakeholders (livestock owners, butchers, slaughterhouse operator, MEWA representatives, etc.) was organised to provide them with first recommendations and collect their feedback. The *AIUla Livestock Sector Scoping and Action Plan* project was completed in early 2023, and the final report

delivered to the RCU and AFALULA. It presents an overview of the current situation regarding livestock production in AIUla (sheep, goats and camels) and recommends key actions to support its development in a quality-oriented vision (animal identification and traceability, veterinary services, training and capacity building, infrastructures such as slaughterhouse and milk collection centres).

- The scope of work for the design, feasibility study and modelling of an abattoir and slaughtering activities was jointly developed with RCU Agriculture. It will serve as the basis for the coming request for proposal managed by AFALULA as part of the approved Strategic Plan.

PARTNER: PHYLUM

COMMUNICATION, PUBLIC RELATIONS, MARKETING & INNOVATION

LA LETTRE D'AFALULA



Diffusion of AFALULA Agriculture and Human Capital Newsletters as well as a special edition dedicated to the 5th anniversary of the Saudi-French intergovernmental agreement signing. Distribution to a database of 5000 contacts.

HORIZON ALULA



Published #2 and #3 issues of AFALULA digital logbook, supported by launch newsletters, covering: Villa Hegra, the Moringa peregrina project, Thales involvement, the Arabian Horse theme, Agriculture value-chains, Lihyanite statue exhibited at the Musée du Louvre and AW2 design for Banyan Tree AlUla.

PRESS TRIPS

- Facilitated a press trip with 3 major media (Le Monde de la Bible, L'Express, Archeologia), taking the opportunity of the 20 years of Saudi-French archaeological cooperation celebration.
- Accompanied the press trip dedicated to Wadi AlFann and Fame exhibition, including French journalists from Le Monde, Le Figaro and Connaissance des Arts.



FRANCOPHONIE - TV SHOW

Facilitated and supported the production of the "AlUla Under the Stars" TV Show, showcasing French and Saudi artists, and broadcast on TV5 Monde. A wide press coverage and world-wide TV broadcast ensured high visibility of the event to promote the splendour of AlUla and celebrate the culture encounter of the two countries.

PARTNERS: DEGEL PROD, TV5MONDE



NFTS

Finalised the 'innovation' project 'NFT-HAMS' (Crypto Leopard) strategy with RCU teams, including 2 phases (collectibles / auction). Completed the scope of work, organised a meeting with the operator (La Collection) in Paris, pending signature. AFALULA is part of the business team and curatorial stream.

FILM PRODUCTION

- Produced a video/interview with architecture firm AW2 to support the communication of Banyan Tree AlUla hotel opening.
- Produced a video dedicated to the Moringa peregrina project, showcasing the objectives, the achievements, the Saudi-French cooperation, leading to the involvement of the local community.
- Finalised and published 4 videos dedicated to 4 of the key domains of



cooperation (Botanics, Human Capital, Tourism & Hospitality, Agriculture). Those productions highlight the work carried out in the field, involving both Saudi and French members of the teams. They are published on social media and institutional websites.

- Documentary production: supported the production of the documentary 'Caravan of Arabia', with Leila Nehmé and her scientific team, on a route between Hegra and Taymā. It will be broadcasted on the French-German channel ARTE.



DAILY ANIMATION OF AFALULA'S SOCIAL NETWORKS TO PROMOTE THE AGENCY, THE RCU, THE ALULA PROJECT AND THE SUCCESS OF THE SAUDI-FRENCH COOPERATION. OVER THE LAST YEAR OF ACTIVITY

Twitter:

- 245 tweets published (FR/GB)
- 1.9K likes in total
- 458K impressions (number of screen displays)

LinkedIn:

- 123 posts published
- 13.3K likes in total
- 555K impressions (number of screen displays)



COMMUNICATION LINKED TO EVENTS

Rolled out 6 communication plans dedicated to 6 key events of Saudi-French cooperation:

- The exhibition opening of the Dadan statue in the Musée du Louvre;
- The celebration of 20 years of Saudi-French archaeological cooperation;
- The visit to AlUla of the French Minister in charge of Foreign Trade, Attractiveness and French Nationals Abroad, Mr Olivier Becht, including the signing of 3 partnerships between leading French companies (RATP Dev, Amame Advisors, Idverde) and the RCU;
- The visit to AlUla of the French Minister of Culture, Mrs Rima Abdul Malak, including the signing of a partnership between the Centre Pompidou and the RCU;
- The visit to KSA of the French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Mrs Catherine Colonna;
- The announcement of the appointment of the founding Villa Hegra CEO, Mrs Feriel Fodil, as well as the selection of its architects, Lacaton & Vassal.

> The plans included Press Releases, Social Media campaigns, VIP visits



AFALULA Cross-Division Projects 2022/2023

_ WATER

_ OASIS

_ VILLA HEGRA

_ ALULA ARTIST RESIDENCIES

Water

ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURES

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE & URBAN DEVELOPMENT

PARTNERS: SUEZ, IRD-CEREGE, BRGM, BRL INGENIERIE

INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

- Hosted a Water Symposium in Paris that ensured participation of a large diversity of RCU stakeholders presented their water-related activities. Areas of alignment were discussed with participants concluding with a proposal of a short-term plan that will be implemented until the water strategy is completed.
- Jointly prepared the official launch of the study on 'Integrated Water Management Strategy' and development of its governance under the sponsorship of HE Majd Shweikeh.
- Actively participated in the interviews and the Water Workshop at Maraya for the exchanges on water under the Integrated Water Management Strategy study, with a large range of stakeholders.
- Organised the presentation of the AIUla South underground water assessment by French expert BRGM to the Sustainability and Agriculture teams. Supported the preparation of the scope of work for designing and developing piezometric network for groundwater monitoring.
- Conducted an international benchmark for water operations services management in AIUla and highlighted critical areas that will require development to reach international standard including water quality and water availability for firefighting.

IRRIGATION TRANSFORMATION PLAN

- Important progresses were accomplished in developing the AIUla Irrigation Transformation Plan. AFALULA accompanied the RCU and its contractor BRL Ingenierie in delivering the full *MP1 Agricultural Water Resources Assessment and Irrigation Transformation Plan* in mid-2022. Similarly, the *Water Resources, Irrigation Infrastructures and Agricultural Water Management Plan for AIUla MP2 & Southern Area* project was launched in end of 2022 and is about to be completed. Both will guide future investments in transforming the irrigation systems of AIUla farms to increase water efficiency and save this precious resource.
- A study tour was organised in Nîmes (South of France) for an RCU Delegation to visit the BRL Group in charge of all agricultural water management and irrigation for the Languedoc-Roussillon-Midi-Pyrénées region (120.000 ha of irrigated land managed); this was the opportunity to understand models of water governance in rural areas, observe innovative technologies in irrigation monitoring and exchange best practices with stakeholders.

WATER WORKSHOP

Following the Oasis Project Workshop in June 2022, a number of participants from the research teams manifested their interest in going in-deeper with chosen themes during specific scientific work sessions. Thus, in addition to the annual Project seminar, a first session was organised in April on the theme of water. It provided an opportunity for the Oasis project teams to share and discuss results, develop a big picture understanding of the issues linked to water in AIUla, and provide more specific inputs on the subject of water regarding: (i) the concept of a future exhibition about water in AIUla, (ii) the analysis of intersections and gaps between the various research projects, and (iii) the issue of water management and governance (past and present).

The working session was followed by a close-out meeting with researchers and partners (BRLi, Suez, BRGM), presenting the outcome of the discussions and the proposed next steps to promote the scientific projects in progress.



Oasis

AGRICULTURE
BOTANICAL PRODUCTS
ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURES
ARCHAEOLOGY

PARTNERS: NYU IN ABU DHABI, CNRS MNHN,
CIRAD, VALORHIZ, IRD, CEREGE, ARCHAÏOS



ARCHAEOLOGY

• UCOP:

The archaeologists of UCOP conducted the 8th field season dedicated to architecture and archaeology material studies. They continued to enrich the database: 201 heritage components were recorded in the database and mapped in the GIS. The survey of the core area was completed. First test pits were excavated.

• ArcAgr:

The geoarchaeological team (ArcAgr-AU) conducted the 7th field campaign, including geoarchaeological and geomorphic surveys.

A total of 77 samples for paleoenvironmental studies and dating were gathered.

Results highlight the existence of natural alluvial and eolian deposits outside of the oasis which have recorded complex hydroclimatic dynamics.

• EcoSeed:

The work done during the fieldwork at AlUla and in laboratories in France offers an impressive list of new and exciting results.

The most exciting results rely on the presence of date-palm and grapevine at Dadan as early as the end of the 2nd mill. BCE.

SOFUNLAND - OASIS SOILS RESEARCH PROJECT

The two final extensive missions were carried out this year and laboratory analyses continuously performed, allowing to:

- Collect a final set of soil samples and gather significant data, including millions of DNA sequences for microbiota; this will now be thoroughly analysed to support wildlife regeneration and sustainable agriculture. The cooperation for the soil project is still ongoing with KAUST University.
- Confirm the hypothesis that the soils where past human activity took place have a specific chemical and biological (DNA) print. This could have major positive implication in the future preventive archaeology processes.
- Discover and identify 2 fungi species, including a famous desert white truffle. Two specimens of the fungi were added to the RCU herbarium.



DATE-PALM BIODIVERSITY PROJECT

- Genetic analyses of the AlUla Barni date's samples collected in end 2021 were completed, confirming that the AlUla Barni is a "*true-to-type cultivar*" (set of clonal individuals), that is, the association of a name and a single genotype reproduced vegetatively (asexually, through offshoot, by humans). It was published in Plants, People and Planet in October 2022.
- Following the signature of the MTA (Material Transfer Agreement) between RCU and CNRS + NYU Abu Dhabi, two final missions were carried out. Data from date-palm farms' owners were gathered and thousands of samples from well-identified and marked date-palms were collected in AlUla's farms, for genetic and morphometric analysis. Over 100 "*named types*" (a name given locally to a type of date-palm, or a "*variety*") of date-palms were identified and will be further studied through these genetic analyses.

WAO WATER RESOURCES IN ALULA OASIS

One mission of the past/present/future water for AlUla (WAO) project was conducted. Field work was jointly carried out with the RCU geologist. Samples were taken from an area in Khaybar where there is a suspicion of a past paleo-lake. Other samples were taken from Harrat Uwairid, to understand the aquifer recharge process and conduct additional water chemical analyses.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL SURVEY

- During several missions and the presence of the anthropology PhD student, final data on social organisation were collected, including on social structure, traditional oasis gardens structure, agricultural practices, relations of communities with wildlife (vegetal and animal). Hypothesis are being faced with field data to understand better the specific past and present social organisation of AlUla.

- The anthropology PhD student ended his residence time in AlUla and handed over the herbarium of plants recorded as used in AlUla, to the RCU Wildlife & Natural Heritage scientific team. This significantly increases the knowledge of the region: both for scientific studies and conservation, and for narratives and curation in museums.

PUBLICATIONS

Several scientific articles were prepared and/or published and scientific communications held in international congresses: 1 article on barni date-palm, 1 article and 2 communications on water, 4 communications on soils, several papers and communications on archaeology, results in peer-review publications and international congresses.

Villa Hegra

EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN
DEVELOPMENT
ARCHITECTURE & URBAN DEVELOPMENT
CULTURE & HERITAGE
HUMAN CAPITAL
TOURISM & HOSPITALITY
GENERAL SECRETARIAT
COMMUNICATION & PUBLIC RELATIONS

STRUCTURE

- The RCU Board of Directors approved the principle of establishment of Villa Hegra in the form of an ad-hoc Saudi Foundation established by Royal Decree.
- The Villa Hegra bylaws have been approved by both Saudi and French governments.

GOVERNANCE

- RCU and AFALULA proceeded with the appointment of the Villa Hegra Foundation CEO. Feriel Fodil joined the RCU/AFALULA team and started to work on the establishment of a major cultural Saudi-French institution.
- RCU appointed the 2 remaining Saudi members for the Board of Directors of Villa Hegra.

ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

- The architecture contract of Villa Hegra+cluster project was signed with French Pritzker prize winners Lacaton & Vassal. Preparatory work with Villa Hegra architect was held and resulted in design guidelines and scope of work revision discussions.
- The kick-off meeting was held in May 2023.

PRE-OPENING CULTURAL PROGRAM 2023

- Following the finalisation of the strategy, the procurement process for the pre-opening cultural program of Villa Hegra was completed and the operator selected. The contract is to be signed. This enables the execution of the pre-opening activities scheduled from September 2023 onwards.
- The curation of the artistic side of the pre-opening 2023 was led by a Saudi-French curators duo: Wejdan Reda (Diriyah Biennale Foundation) and Arnaud Morand.

HOSPITALITY

The operator of the ApartmentHotel of the Villa Hegra cluster is in process of being selected.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

- Two science outreach experts from the French NGO (with an international network) 'Les Petits Débrouillards' ('Smart Kids') came on site in AlUla to observe the context and adapt their offer for science workshops for the community.
- The digital after-school program for teenagers led by TUMO (forum des images) is in process of being implemented for the fall 2023.

COMMUNICATION & PUBLIC RELATIONS PLAN

- Completed the scope of work for the communication agency that will develop the SteerCo strategic Communication & Public Relations plan decisions.
- The vendor for the communication and PR of Villa Hegra has been selected and the contract is in process of being signed after an RPF process. The work on the Villa Hegra logo has been initiated.
- The communication around the appointment of Villa Hegra CEO and the selection of Lacaton & Vassal as architects of the project has been jointly led.



AlUla Artist Residencies

ARTS & INNOVATION
CULTURE & HERITAGE
COMMUNICATION & PUBLIC RELATIONS

PARTNER: MANIFESTO

- Delivered 3 new iterations of the AlUla Artist Residency programme. AFALULA co-led the project, including artistic direction and curation, vendors management, operation, communications and PR.
- Alongside the RCU team, finalised and delivered the 2023/2024 strategy. Currently working on 4 new iterations including new transversal formats envisioned as cultural asset prefiguration: botanical and landscaping residency, design residency, and long-term residencies tied to an artwork commission. Drafted and finalised scope of works, participated in vendor sourcing, technical offers assessment etc.
- Co-curation and delivery of the 2 exhibitions "Palimpsest of Time" as part of the AlUla Art Festival, showing the research and work of a selection of 13 artists and retrospective on the 26 artists who took part in the program since its creation at Mabiti and Madrasat Addeera. Delivery of collaterals (publication, public programmes, etc.)
- Co-led a new long term format commission-based residency with French artist Grégory Chatonsky, focussing on the interactions between AI, nature, and heritage.





M_hammed Kilito, *Untold Tales*



Ayman Zedani, *The Keepers*



Agnieszka Kurant, *A.A.I. (Artificial Artificial Intelligence)*



Manon Wertenbroek, *I Was Here*

PALIMPSEST OF TIME 2023



Sabine Mirlesse, Geomancy



Augustine Paredes, The Bitter Taste of Sweetness



Daniah Al Saleh, Hinat



Mohammad Al Faraj, The Date-Fruit of Knowledge

AFALULA TEAM fully dedicated to AlUla project delivery



GENERAL SECRETARIAT

- **General Secretariat Public Affairs & Institutional Relations**
Laura Kwiatowski
- **Controlling & Compliance**
Sophie Rateau
- **Accounting & Finance**
Bruno Dreuillet
- **Corporate & Business Relations**
Arezki Belache
- **Exploitation**
Baidi Sy
Khalid Amine

CULTURE & HERITAGE

- **Scientific Director**
Sophie Makariou
- **Museums**
Tehzeeb Sandhu
- **Arts**
Arnaud Morand
- **Exhibitions & Interpretation**
Claire Pinault
- **Project Manager**
Margaux Falciassecca

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Ingrid Périssé
- **Project Manager**
Margaux Bodart

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Etienne Tricaud
- **Deputy Director**
Jérémy Moles
- **Planning & Urban Devt Advisor**
Andreas Heym
- **Senior Architect & Urban Planner**
Najate Abouali
- **Senior Architect HMO-NP**
Clara O'Neill
- **Junior Architect-Urbanist**
Thomas Lacour
- **Sustainability Lead**
Andres Moreno

EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN OFFICE

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Gérard Mestrallet
- **Office Manager**
Lucie Aubeaux
- **Executive Assitant to Mathias Curnier**
Murielle Johnson
- **Assisant to Laura Kwiatowski**
Nadia Boudjema
- **CEO Villa Hegra**
Ferial Fodil

TOURISM & HOSPITALITY

- **Director**
Nicolas Lefebvre

SECURITY & SAFETY

- **Director**
Charles Yvinec
- **Security**
Younes Benabdelouahed

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- **Director**
Guilhem Constans
- **Project Manager**
Carl Wozniczka-Brousse

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- **Director**
Anne Lardoux de Pazzis
- **Senior Advisers**
Michel Bolze
Hazem Abdalla

PARIS-RIYADH LIAISON

- **Senior Liaison Officer**
Frank Barbaro

CROSS-DIVISION ASSISTANT

Isabelle Patti

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- **Chief of Staff, Director Communications, Marketing, Innovation & Public Relations**
Mathias Curnier
- **Content Manager**
Jeanne Garcin
- **Innovation**
Arnaud Morand
- **Event & Public Relations**
Dali El Haddad

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- **Director**
Elisabeth Dodinet
- **Ingredients and Beauty Project**
Nicolas Levron
- **Natural Ingredients Project & Expertise Manager**
Emilie Truche

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- **Director**
Stéphane Forman
- **Senior Consultant - Sustainable agri-food chains development**
Emilie Mirlicourtois

DEVELOPMENT

- **Director**
Youssef Safouane

EQUESTRIAN PROJECTS

- **Director**
Antoine Sinniger
- **Development Manager**
Dali El Haddad
- **Project Manager**
Peter Matar



OUR VALUES

SHARING
GOODWILL
COHESION
PERFORMANCE

—
The French Agency for AIUla Development is defined by fundamental values, which we share, which we identify with, and which characterise our work each day.

SHARING

From multiple disciplines and diverse backgrounds, we promote the qualities of listening and openness. Our strength lies in the harmonious blend of our multiple areas of expertise. Exchanging and sharing are inseparable from the pleasure we take in working together to support our shared project.

GOODWILL

Mutual respect is firmly established as the core value guiding our relationships with others. This goodwill enables us to work with others in a spirit of trust, both within the Agency and with our partners. Listening, availability and empathy make our everyday interactions particularly rewarding.

COHESION

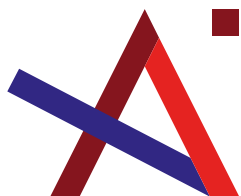
United by a sense of solidarity that gives us strength and that we actively cultivate, we work hand-in-hand to successfully achieve our goals as part of our project, in an atmosphere of trust and team spirit.

PERFORMANCE

Our mission to jointly build the AIUla project drives us each day to surpass ourselves, to be more daring, in order to continue raising performance levels. Our team's commitment to a shared goal is aligned with deep ethical and environmental convictions. Driven by a common goal, our collective success is the result of an ambition that is shared by all.

OUR VALUES

SHARING
GOODWILL
COHESION
PERFORMANCE



AFALULA

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