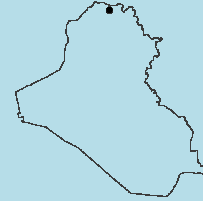


# Ser Amadiya & Sulav Resort (D2)



Surveyed in summer and winter 2007 and 2010.

Admin Area: Dohuk

Coordinates: N 37° 6' 29" E 43° 21' 58"

Area: 5114 ha

Altitude: 1050-1228 m

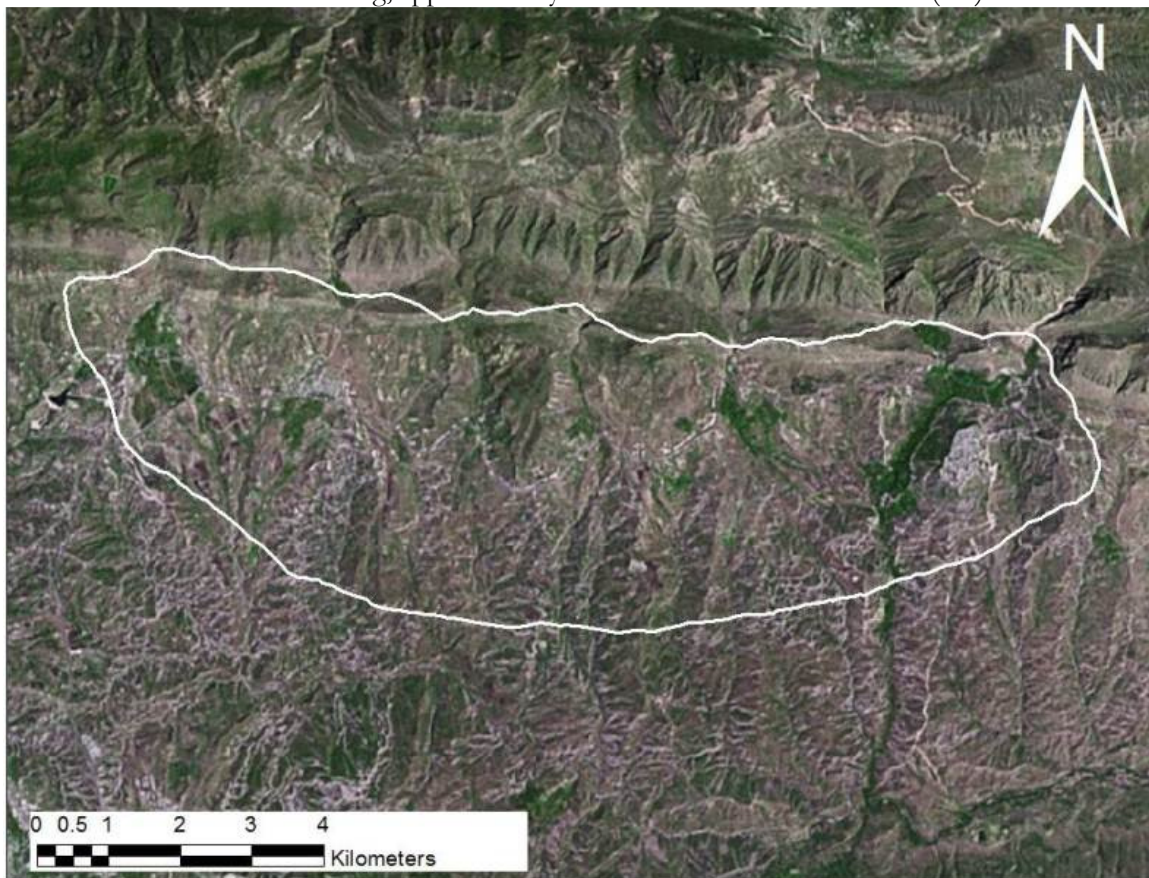
IBA Criteria: A1 and A3

IPA Criteria: Under assessment

Status: Unprotected

Ecoregion: Zagros Mountains Forest Steppe  
(PA0446)

Directional information: This site is located about 41 km northeast of Dohuk city, about 7 km northeast of the Town of Sarsang, approximately 19 km north of Gara Mountain (D4).





Ser Amadiya Town in summer (Photo by Saman A. Ahmad, 2009)



Sulav Resort in summer (Photo by Saman A. Ahmad, 2009)

Yellow	Green	Green	Orange	Yellow	Red	Green	Yellow

**Site Description:** Ser Amadiya is an ancient town and historical site with about 34 archaeological features, some of which go back to the period of the Assyrians, Medeans, and different Kurdish periods. The town sits atop a rocky ridge and the area features cliffs, gorges and a valley to the south. The ridge top is about 1 km in length and 500 m in width, and the town has a population of approx. 6000. The north slope of the ridge descends through thin scrub to *Quercus* and *Juniperus* shrub forest that has a rocky, grassy floor with numerous streams and springs.

Sulav Resort consists of is an area of rocky cliffs and a small resort just west of Ser Amadiya. There is a spring coming from mountains running north to south and there are *Juglans* sp. trees along the stream. One of Saddam's former palaces is located inside the western edge of the delineation. The

nearest village is Aneshke, southwest of the delineation and the nearest town is Qadesh located to the southeast. Agriculture is practiced in the form of vineyards and orchards.

Important Bird Area Criteria	Observation made 2007-2010. Unless stated otherwise numbers are estimates based on extrapolations using area/transect counts and area of known habitat. (see Methodology on p. XX).	
<b>A1. Globally threatened species</b>		
	Breeding	Wintering/Passage
Egyptian Vulture <i>Neophron percnopterus</i> (Summer visitor)	1 pair (2009-2010)	
<b>A3. Biome-restricted species</b>		
<b>Mediterranean biome</b>		
	Breeding	Wintering/Passage
Masked Shrike <i>Lanius nubicus</i> (Summer visitor)	27 pairs (2008-2010)	
Sombre Tit <i>Poecile lugubris</i> (Resident)	95 pairs	
Western Rock Nuthatch <i>Sitta neumayer</i> (Resident)	49 pairs (2008-2010)	
Eastern Black-eared Wheatear <i>Oenanthe melanoleuca</i> (Summer visitor)	22 pairs (2008, 2010)	
Black-headed Bunting <i>Emberiza melanocephala</i> (Summer visitor)	85 pairs (2008)	
Important Plant Area Criteria	Rationale	
<b>A4. Site contains national endemic, near endemic, regional endemic and/or regional range-restricted species or infraspecific taxa</b>	The site contains six proposed regional endemic species <i>Paronychia kurdica</i> , <i>Thymus syriacus</i> , <i>Campanula mardinensis</i> , <i>Onosma albo-roseum</i> , <i>Pisum formosum</i> , and <i>Alcea kurdica</i> and one locally rare species <i>Linum velutinum</i>	
<b>A5. Site contains species of special interest</b>	This site contains a good population of pistachios <i>Pistacia eurycarpa</i> which are economically and culturally important. important genetic resources species such as <i>Avena fatua</i> , and <i>Poa bulbosa</i>	
<b>B1. Site is a particularly species-rich example of defined habitat type</b>	Mountain Forest- Mountain Riverine Forest Mountain Forest Vegetation- Oak Forest- Lowest and Medium Zones	

**Additional Important Bird Observations:** A total of 74 species was recorded. In addition to those listed in the table, the site also held three Irano-Turanian, one Eurasian Steppe and Desert and one Eurasian High-Montane biome-restricted species (Table XX) but these did not trigger inclusion under criterion A3. Eastern Cinereous Bunting *Emberiza semenovi* is Near Threatened.

#### Other Important Fauna

*Mammals, Reptiles, and other Fauna:* Mammal data were collected in 2010. One local reported a sighting of the globally endangered Persian Fallow Deer *Dama mesopotamica* in 2006, but this remains

unverified. Persian Squirrel *Sciurus anomalus* was observed, which though a least concern species has a declining population trend and is heavily persecuted for the pet trade in Iraq. No fish samples were taken.

**Plants & Habitat:** About 110 plant species were identified. Two waypoints were surveyed in two main habitat types:

- 1- Mountain Forest Vegetation- Mountain Riverine Forest (N 37 6 29 E 43 21 58) which is characterized by *Juglans regia* and *Populus alba* (trees), and *Hedera helix*, and *Paliurus spina-christi* and *Securigera securidaca*, and *Alyssum strictum*.
- 2- Mountain Forest Vegetation-Oak Forests (medium and highest sub- zone) (N 37 04 57 E 43 28 32), which is characterized by *Quercus aegilops*, *Q. infectoria*, *Pistacia* spp., *Acer monspessulanum*, and *Ficus carica* (trees); *Prunus orientalis*, *Rhus coriaria*, and *Anagyris foetida* (shrubs); *Anchusa* spp., *Prangos ferulace*, *Serratula grandifolia*, and *Gladiolus italicus* (herbs); *Aegilops* spp., *Poa bulbosa* and *Bromus* spp. (grasses).

The ecological condition was slightly disturbed, with an ecological scale of two. The slope was steep (27-45°). The site is located in the Zagros range, where the geology is siltstones and sandstones, and soil type is sandy clay. The non-vegetated area was less than 5%.

**Conservation Issues:** Intensification of tourism was considered a very high threat. Sulav is a major resort close to Dohuk, and many people use the area for picnicking, resulting in the accumulation of garbage and potential sewage problems. Road construction has continued over a large area of the valley during the last three years, and was assessed as a high threat. The medium threats were water pollution, hunting, and agricultural and grazing. Many endemic and rare plant species occur, giving this area special priority as a potential protected area.

**Recommendations:** It is recommended to target both locals and tourists with education campaigns to increase their awareness of the environment and cultural heritage of the area. The education and awareness programs should focus on sustainable use of natural resources. Any new development and reconstruction undertaken should be addressed by the local government with the involvement of conservationists and local stakeholders. Ser Amadiya town itself is unlikely to expand in terms of development due to its geographic position on the ridge top (though cultural restoration/protection projects should be pursued) but areas below the town and in the surrounding areas may be more subject to development in future. It is also important to apply regulations to control and guide development as well as the extent and types of tourism. A management plan to protect the environmental and cultural heritage of the site should be prepared that addresses issues such as water and waste services, sustainable socio-economic development, transportation planning, habitat protection, agricultural, grazing and general land management activities.