

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.11425133

# THE ROLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATORY AUTHORITIES IN PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY OF NATURAL RESOURCES: A LEGAL ANALYTICAL STUDY

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Received: 11/11/2025

Accepted: 18/12/2025

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## ABSTRACT

*This study aims to examine the role of environmental administrative control as a regulatory tool governing environmentally impactful activities in order to promote sustainable development. It seeks to clarify how such control contributes to the rational use of natural resources, the reduction of environmental encroachments, and the preservation of environmental sustainability for present and future generations. The study adopts a descriptive, analytical, inductive, and comparative approach. It analyzes relevant Jordanian environmental legislation and assesses the practical reality of environmental administrative control in the management of natural resources, through an examination of responsible authorities, regulatory instruments, and applied practices. A comparative reference to the French experience is included to highlight international best practices in natural resource sustainability. The findings indicate that environmental administrative control in Jordan plays a significant role in environmental protection by limiting activities that may lead to the exploitation or depletion of natural resources. However, the implementation of this control faces several obstacles, including weak institutional coordination, overlapping legislative mandates, and insufficient environmental awareness within society. The study concludes that enhancing the effectiveness of environmental administrative control is essential for ensuring the sustainability of natural resources. This requires strengthening interagency*

*coordination, expanding community environmental awareness programs, and updating environmental legislation to create a coherent and integrated legal framework capable of supporting sustainable development objectives.*

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**KEYWORDS:** Natural Resources; Environmental Administrative Control; Environmental Dimension; Sustainable Development; Environmental Legislation.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Environmental administrative control represents one of the core functions of public administration, exercised by its various institutions to preserve public order in all its dimensions. The growing global emphasis on sustainable development has reinforced the need to strengthen this form of control, particularly as states strive to meet the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own. In Jordan, environmental administrative control has become an essential tool for supporting sustainable development strategies through ensuring compliance with environmental legislation, regulating the rational use of natural resources, and reinforcing the social justice dimension embodied in the environmental, economic, and social pillars of sustainability.

The international community has played a decisive role in shaping the environmental dimension of development, particularly in response to increasing pressure on natural resources. Within this global context, environmental administrative control has emerged as a critical mechanism for regulating environmentally impactful activities, preventing environmental encroachments, and ensuring the equitable and sustainable use of natural resources. In Jordan, the evolution of administrative and development concepts has elevated the environmental dimension to a central position within national public policies. Legislative frameworks, regulations, and executive directives now constitute vital tools enabling administrative authorities to enhance environmental sustainability and confront the growing challenges associated with the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources.

### 1.1. Importance Of The Study

The significance of this study lies in its theoretical and practical contributions to the field of environmental protection in Jordan. Theoretically, it supports the development and modernization of legal provisions related to environmental protection and the prevention of natural resource exploitation. It also clarifies the role of environmental administrative control in safeguarding the sustainable management of natural resources as mandated by national environmental legislation. Practically, the study analyzes the legal and operational tools used in environmental oversight, offering insights that can benefit the Ministry of Environment, regulatory agencies, and municipalities by enhancing their capacities to achieve national sustainable development goals.

### 1.2. Study Objectives

This study seeks to:

1. Define the concept and dimensions of environmental administrative control.
2. Clarify the objectives of environmental administrative control in ensuring the sustainable preservation of natural resources.
3. Identify the main institutional and legislative challenges that limit the effectiveness of environmental administrative control in Jordan.
4. Propose practical and legal recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of environmental administrative control in managing natural resources and protecting them from depletion.

### 1.3. Study Problem

The study addresses the following central questions:

To what extent does environmental administrative control in Jordan contribute to achieving the environmental dimension of sustainable development and ensuring the protection of natural resources? Furthermore, how effective is the current legislative and institutional framework in enabling administrative authorities to perform their environmental functions efficiently?

### 1.4. Study Questions

The main question of the study gives rise to several sub-questions:

1. What is the legal framework governing environmental administrative control in Jordan?
2. Which natural resources require sustainable conservation, and why?
3. What objectives does environmental administrative control seek to achieve?
4. What are the principal challenges that hinder the effectiveness of environmental administrative control?
5. How can regulatory and administrative tools be developed to enhance their effectiveness for environmental protection and sustainable development?

### 1.5. Study Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive, analytical, inductive, and partially comparative methodology. It analyzes relevant legislative texts such as the Environmental Protection Law, the Local Administration Law, the Agriculture Law, and the Public Health Law. The study also examines the practical reality of environmental administrative

control in Jordan in the context of natural resource management, focusing on the responsible authorities, regulatory instruments, practical enforcement measures, and a comparative reference to international practices—particularly those of France—which relate to the study's subject matter.

### ***1.5.1. The Conceptual And Legal Framework For Environmental Administrative Control***

Administrative control is one of the most important mechanisms exercised by administrative authorities to preserve public order (Kashkash, 2019, p. 506). Traditionally, public order consists of four core elements: security, public health, public tranquility, and public morality (Basyouni, 2007, p. 24). In contemporary administrative practice, environmental control has emerged as a modern extension of these functions, driven by the growing need to regulate activities that impact natural resources and to support the objectives of sustainable development. The following sections clarify the conceptual foundations of this form of control.

### ***1.5.2. The Concept Of Environmental Administrative Control***

Administrative control has been defined in jurisprudence as “a set of legal and administrative tools that enable the administration to maintain public order in both its classical and modern dimensions” (Abdullah, 2005, p. 45). Similarly, the French jurist Waline described administrative control as “a group of regulatory norms imposed by public authority to govern individual activities and achieve the public good in accordance with the law” (Abdul Ghani, 2015, p. 13).

### ***1.5.3. Definition Of Environmental Administrative Control***

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The concept of administrative control has expanded to incorporate the environmental dimension, given that the stewardship of natural resources is one of the core pillars of environmental protection and sustainable development (Teodorescu, 2015). Historically, administrative control focused on regulating individual and collective activities to preserve public order. However, contemporary administrative jurisprudence recognizes environmental protection as an integral component of public order (Al-Saratawi, 2018).

Environmental administrative control is directly linked to sustainable development, as it encompasses

the protection of natural resources, pollution prevention, and the preservation of biodiversity in a manner that safeguards the environmental rights of current and future generations (United Nations, 2022).

In this context, environmental administrative control may be defined as “the set of procedures and measures imposed by public authorities on individuals and institutions to preserve the environment through comprehensive environmental protection mechanisms” (Abdul Moneim, 2022, p. 240).

Environmental administrative control has also been described as “a set of procedural rules issued through administrative decisions that aim to preserve public order in all its dimensions and to regulate or modify individual behaviors that may impact the environment” (Al-Makkawi, 2008, p. 11).

The primary purpose of environmental administrative control is to achieve public interest by protecting the environment and human health, and by ensuring the preservation of natural resources from waste, misuse, or depletion (Nasif, 2019, p. 45).

In this context, the Jordanian legislator defines environmental protection as: “the preservation and improvement of the components and elements of the environment, preventing their deterioration or pollution, or limiting such pollution to safe levels. These components include air, water, soil, natural life, human beings, and their resources” (Environmental Protection Law, 2017).

Similarly, the French legislator considers environmental protection a constitutional obligation. The French Constitution (1958), through the Environmental Charter of 2004, affirms that “the French people solemnly declare their commitment to human rights and the principles of national sovereignty, along with the rights and duties defined in the Environmental Charter.” This includes the duty of every individual to participate in the preservation and improvement of the environment.

In Jordanian law, administrative control takes on an environmental dimension as part of the State's duty to preserve natural capital. This responsibility is implemented through a set of laws and regulations, including Environmental Protection Law No. 6 of 2017, the Water Authority Law No. 18 of 1988, the Local Government Law No. 22 of 2021, the Greater Amman Municipality Law No. 18 of 2021, the Agriculture No. 13 of 2015, and the Town and Village Planning Law No. 79 of 1966. Additional regulatory instruments such as the Environmental Licensing and Classification System No. 69 of 2020, issued pursuant to Article 5(a) of the Environmental

Protection Law, further clarify the environmental obligations and procedures required of administrative authorities.

### **1.5.6. Characteristics Of Environmental Administrative Control**

Scholarly literature indicates that environmental administrative control transcends the traditional objectives of administrative regulation, evolving into a fundamental tool for achieving environmental justice and safeguarding the rights of future generations (Abdul Rahman, 2020, p. 82). As a result, environmental administrative control has become a key mechanism in ensuring the equitable distribution of natural resources across generations. This requires adherence to ecological limits, as each ecosystem possesses thresholds for consumption and depletion that must not be exceeded; otherwise, environmental degradation inevitably follows.

Environmental administrative control exhibits several characteristics that distinguish it from traditional forms of administrative control (Abdul Rahman, 2020). These characteristics include the following:

1. **Preventive Orientation:** Environmental administrative control is primarily preventive, aiming to avert environmental harm before it occurs rather than responding only after damage has taken place.
2. **Interdisciplinary Nature:** It requires coordinated action among multiple governmental bodies, such as ministries responsible for the environment, municipalities, water resources, and agriculture, reflecting the cross-cutting nature of environmental issues.
3. **Technical and Specialized Basis:** Environmental regulatory decisions rely on technical and scientific assessments, including tools such as environmental impact studies, which provide essential data for evaluating the potential environmental consequences of projects and activities.
4. **Participatory Dimension:** Environmental administrative control incorporates the involvement of civil society, private sector institutions, and the broader public, emphasizing collective responsibility for environmental protection and sustainable resource management.

### **1.6. Environmental Administrative Control And Sustainable Development (Revised Version)**

The concept of sustainable development first

emerged in the Brundtland Report, *Our Common Future*, published by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987. Recognizing that environmental conservation is a fundamental component of public policy, the Jordanian government has incorporated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its national development strategies, including the National Green Growth Strategy (2017–2030). This reflects a national commitment to integrating sustainability principles into development planning and administrative governance.

#### **1.6.1 Definition Of Sustainable Development**

Sustainable development is commonly defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (UNWCED, 1987).

In Jordanian legislation, sustainable development is defined as “development that achieves a balance between environmental security, economic development, and social development, and ensures the use and preservation of natural resources to maintain a decent standard of living for future generations” (Environmental Law, 2017).

Regardless of the methodological approach adopted, sustainable development is built upon three interrelated pillars: the economic dimension, the social dimension, and the environmental dimension. These pillars form a comprehensive framework in which the achievement of sustainability depends on the

#### **1.6.2. The Relationship Between Administrative Control And Sustainable Development**

Administrative control represents the primary mechanism through which sustainable development goals are translated into concrete, actionable measures. Through this mechanism, the State regulates activities that have environmental impacts, ensures the protection of natural resources, promotes environmental justice, mitigates pollution and harmful emissions, and organizes urban development in accordance with environmentally responsible planning. Sustainable development cannot be realized in practice without an effective administrative control system capable of enforcing environmental standards, preventing resource depletion, and integrating environmental considerations into development policies and projects (OECD, 2020, p. 12).

Fundamentally, the environmental dimension constitutes a foundational pillar of sustainable

development policies. It encompasses biodiversity conservation, natural resource protection, the reduction of environmental impacts resulting from development projects, the adoption of clean energy alternatives, and effective waste management. In Jordan, this dimension is implemented through administrative control measures such as the mandatory environmental impact assessment required under Article 14 of the Environmental Classification and Licensing System (2020), restrictions on construction in environmentally sensitive areas, and continuous monitoring of industrial emissions and waste generation.

Additionally, sustainable development in Jordan places particular emphasis on the protection and sustainable management of natural resources, especially in light of the country's limited and highly stressed resource base. In its 2023 report, the Jordanian Ministry of Environment emphasized that "enhancing the environmental dimension can only be achieved through strong and effective administrative control tools," underscoring the essential connection between sustainable development and the preservation of natural resources—particularly non-renewable water resources, which are vital for human well-being.

## **2. LEGAL REGULATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL IN JORDANIAN LEGISLATION**

Environmental protection constitutes one of the fundamental responsibilities of administrative authorities, implemented through the enforcement of environmental legislation. In Jordan, increasing environmental encroachments have weakened the natural resource base, making it essential to examine the legal provisions that regulate environmental protection and ensure the sustainable management of natural resources (Al-Wreikat, 2025).

### **2.1. Legal Rules Governing Environmental Administrative Control**

The legal framework governing environmental administrative control in Jordan is composed of a combination of general and specialized legislation designed to protect the environment from pollution and prevent the degradation of natural resources. The most prominent legal instruments include:

#### **2.1.1. Environmental Protection Law No. 6 Of 2017**

This is the central legislative instrument in the field of environmental protection. It sets out the general principles governing environmental

preservation, pollution prevention, and sustainable resource use. The law grants the Ministry of Environment extensive authority in monitoring, inspection, and enforcement.

#### **2.1.2. Environmental Classification And Licensing System (2020)**

This system requires an environmental impact assessment for any project prior to approval. It classifies activities according to their environmental risks and ensures that preventive measures are applied before project implementation.

#### **2.1.3. Local Government Law No. 22 Of 2021 And Greater Amman Municipality Law No. 18 Of 2021**

These laws empower municipalities to regulate local activities, including environmental protection, public health, and waste management. Municipalities play an essential role as frontline administrative bodies in enforcing environmental regulations.

#### **2.1.4. Town And Village Planning Law No. 79 Of 1966**

This law regulates urban planning and explicitly prohibits unplanned construction in environmentally sensitive or unsuitable areas, thereby preserving natural landscapes and reducing environmental risks.

#### **2.1.5. Agriculture Law No. 13 Of 2015**

This law outlines rules related to the protection of trees, forests, and rangelands, and addresses activities such as logging, grazing, and the exploitation of forest resources.

Together, these legislative instruments form an integrated environmental legal system in Jordan, where general environmental principles intersect with sectoral regulations to ensure comprehensive and sustainable protection of natural resources (Ministry of Environment, 2022, p. 33).

## **2.2. Interaction Between Relevant Environmental Laws And Regulations**

Although Jordanian environmental legislation is relatively comprehensive, it still faces several legal and regulatory challenges (Al-Dalaeen, 2023, p. 28). One of the most prominent issues is the duplication and overlap of authorities among different institutions. For example, the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Local Government (represented by municipalities), and the Royal Scientific Society often share or intersect in licensing

and inspection responsibilities. This overlap creates practical challenges in enforcement and reduces overall administrative efficiency.

Moreover, some regulatory instruments have not kept pace with technological developments, particularly in emerging areas such as e-waste management and renewable energy systems. This gap limits the ability of existing legislation to adequately address modern environmental concerns. Added to this is the absence of a unified national framework for environmental oversight, resulting in fragmented monitoring mechanisms and inconsistent performance evaluation across institutions.

Environmental regulations in Jordan include several key systems, such as the Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Regulation No. 68 of 2020, the Nature Protection System No. 29 of 2005, and the Environmental Incentive System No. 33 of 2022. Jordan is also party to several international agreements, including the 1992 Rio Convention on Biological Diversity. In its 2021 report, the World Bank recommended that Jordan review its environmental legislation to minimize overlap, streamline regulatory responsibilities, and reinforce a unified institutional framework.

Under the various environmental laws, administrative authorities are vested with broad powers, including issuing technical environmental instructions—such as standards for air quality and permissible emission levels—and suspending projects or activities that violate legal requirements, in accordance with Article 24 of the Environmental Protection Law (2017). These authorities may also impose administrative sanctions, including fines, facility closures, or license revocations.

In cases of serious violations, environmental matters may be referred to the judiciary. Article 25 of the Environmental Protection Law (2017) explicitly states: “The Minister or his delegate may issue an order suspending any activity proven to have caused serious environmental damage until the violation is remedied.”

### **3. Implications Of Environmental Administrative Control For Protecting Natural Resources**

The relationship between administrative control and environmental protection directly supports the achievement of the environmental dimension of sustainable development. This connection is grounded in the recognition that natural resources are inherently limited (Alrfoua, 2025). Accordingly, sustainable management requires the administration

of natural assets in a manner that guarantees fair and equitable access to resources for both present and future generations. This principle of intergenerational equity is reflected in several essential requirements.

#### ***3.1. Environmental Administrative Control as a Tool for Protecting Natural Resources***

Human activities—whether actual or planned—inevitably affect the environment. Through its regulatory functions, environmental administrative control contributes directly to the environmental dimension of sustainable development by mitigating negative impacts on natural resources. This is achieved through various mechanisms, including:

- protecting forests, water resources, and soil from degradation, pollution, or depletion;
- imposing restrictions on projects with adverse environmental effects (Awaisheh, 2025);
- regulating the extraction of natural resources such as phosphates and minerals to ensure long-term sustainability.

A central premise of sustainable development is the non-depletion of natural resources, given their essential role in supporting all human activity (Murad, 2009, p. 108). For this reason, environmental administrative control plays a crucial role in transforming conventional development into sustainable development—one that conserves resources rather than exhausts them. As global population pressures increase, the demand for food, housing, and other necessities also grows. However, the natural systems that provide these resources cannot expand indefinitely, making effective environmental administrative control indispensable for ensuring resource sustainability (Bakri, 2007, p. 153).

#### ***3.2. Balancing Investment Requirements And Environmental Protection (Revised Version)***

Environmental administrative control seeks to ensure that economic development projects do not conflict with environmental regulations. This balance reflects the core principle of sustainable development, which requires harmonizing economic growth with the responsible use of natural resources. In practice, this means that resource consumption must not exceed the ecosystem’s ability to regenerate. Achieving such balance contributes directly to improving quality of life, reducing social inequalities, and combating poverty (IUCN, 1991).

One of the most prominent tools used to achieve this balance is the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), required for major development projects.

Under Jordanian law, no development project may proceed without an EIA, which enables administrative authorities to evaluate potential environmental impacts in advance and adopt preventive measures (OECD, 2020). Investors are also required to rehabilitate land after resource extraction to restore environmental integrity.

Importantly, achieving sustainable development does not entail hindering or suspending investment initiatives. Instead, it requires guiding these projects to comply with environmental standards and ensuring that administrative oversight mechanisms are robust enough to prevent environmental harm while supporting responsible economic activity (Markku, 2004).

### ***3.3. Preventing The Overexploitation Of Natural Resources And Managing Them Sustainably***

Environmental administrative control plays a crucial role in rationalizing the exploitation of natural resources—particularly water, forests, rangelands, and groundwater—while regulating harmful practices such as overgrazing and unlicensed well drilling. These measures are essential to protecting Jordan's natural heritage (Al-Khraisat, 2025). Sustainable natural resource management is one of the core objectives of sustainable development in Jordan, as unsustainable exploitation remains one of the most significant environmental threats facing the country (Al-Zaydiyyin, 2022, p. 21).

To achieve these goals, environmental administrative control employs a combination of preventive, regulatory, and punitive measures. These mechanisms help limit environmental encroachments and ensure that resource consumption does not exceed ecological capacity. The most important dimensions of this control include the following:

#### ***3.3.1. Rationalizing Water Use***

Water is Jordan's scarcest natural resource (Ministry of Water and Irrigation, 2021), making its sustainable management a top national priority. Water depletion caused by overuse presents one of the most pressing environmental challenges in the country. Effective management requires a coordinated set of legal and administrative procedures, including:

- Preventing unlicensed well drilling: Administrative authorities monitor groundwater extraction and impose penalties on individuals or institutions that drill wells illegally.

- Allocating water resources equitably: Water distribution is regulated based on environmental, household, and agricultural needs (Al-Khraisat, 2025).
- Monitoring consumption: Authorities oversee water use in high-consumption sectors—particularly agriculture and industry—and promote efficient irrigation systems and sustainable agricultural techniques to reduce water waste.

#### ***3.3.2. Forest Protection And Regulation Of Exploitation***

Forests constitute a vital natural resource in Jordan, contributing to biodiversity preservation, climate regulation, and pollution reduction. Effective forest management is therefore essential for preventing uncontrolled depletion. Key mechanisms include:

- Controlling logging activities: Environmental legislation strictly prohibits illegal logging and the unauthorized reduction of forest areas, while commercial logging is regulated under official supervision.
- Promoting reforestation: National and local initiatives—such as Arbor Day campaigns—aim to expand forest cover, rehabilitate degraded lands, and combat desertification (Al-Wreikat, 2025).

#### ***3.3.3. Combating Overgrazing***

Overgrazing is a major factor contributing to land degradation and increasing desertification. Environmental administrative control addresses this challenge through the following measures (National Environment Center, 2022):

- Restricting grazing in vulnerable or degraded areas.
- Banning grazing in designated agricultural zones and nature reserves.
- Encouraging sustainable livestock practices and educating farmers and herders on environmentally balanced grazing methods.

#### ***3.3.4. Regulating And Preventing Unlicensed Well Drilling***

Unlicensed well drilling is one of the most serious threats to Jordan's already limited water resources. Administrative authorities monitor groundwater extraction and enforce strict control measures as outlined in national policies and the National Water Strategy (2023–2040, p. 45):

- Licensing based on actual needs: Well-drilling licenses are issued only when justified by



genuine water needs.

- Prohibiting drilling in environmentally sensitive or protected areas.
- Closing illegal wells and imposing strict penalties on violators to deter excessive groundwater pumping.

In summary, the sustainable management and protection of natural resources – particularly water – is a fundamental objective of environmental administrative control in Jordan. This is reinforced by Article 30 of the Water Authority Law No. 18 of 1988, which underscores the role of administrative authorities in safeguarding water resources as an essential pillar of environmental protection and sustainable development.

#### **4. THE ROLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL IN ACHIEVING THE ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION OF NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

Many countries – particularly developing nations – face a wide range of environmental challenges that negatively affect ecosystems and human well-being. Jordan is no exception; despite the existence of sector-specific environmental legislation, the country continues to experience various forms of environmental degradation (Al-Dabbas, 2025). In this context, environmental administrative control plays a central role in promoting the environmental dimension of sustainable natural resource management.

##### **4.1. Environmental Administrative Control Tools**

Administrative authorities rely on several tools to implement environmental oversight. The most important of these tools are outlined below.

###### **4.1.1. Environmental Licenses**

Environmental licenses constitute a fundamental preventive mechanism used by administrative authorities to regulate activities that may affect the environment. These legal instruments grant prior authorization for activities, ensuring that they comply with environmental requirements before they are carried out (Environmental Classification and Licensing System, 2020). Preventive control is widely recognized as more effective and less costly than addressing environmental harm after it occurs (Al-Dalaeen & Al-Suwailemin, 2021, p. 8).

Under Article 2 of the Environmental Protection Law (2017), an environmental license is defined as “a permit issued by the Ministry or any entity authorized by it to establishments whose activities do

not require environmental impact assessment studies.” The law also defines an environmental permit as the authorization granted to begin operations after verifying compliance with the conditions specified in the license.

In administrative law, licenses are considered binding administrative decisions, given that they are unilateral acts issued by the administrative authority (Kanaan, 2006, p. 291). The licensing system serves as a protective tool aimed at safeguarding public order and preventing activities that may pose environmental risks (Al-Dessouki, 2009, p. 355). Importantly, the issuance of a license does not absolve establishments from liability for any environmental damage that may result from their activities (Al-Wreikat, 2025).

Article 4(b) of the Environmental Protection Law (2017) explicitly prohibits administrative bodies from authorizing any development project without conducting an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The EIA is an anticipatory study designed to identify and evaluate the potential direct or indirect impacts of a project throughout its stages. It aims to reduce pollution and prevent environmental degradation by applying the principle of “prevention before treatment.”

The EIA process also forms the basis for classifying development projects according to their level of environmental risk (Environmental Classification and Licensing System, 2020). A practical example is the Al-Shidiya phosphate mining project, which underwent a comprehensive environmental assessment prior to licensing, including an evaluation of its potential impacts on groundwater and local vegetation (Ministry of Environment, 2022).

In summary, the environmental impact assessment requirement is a core preventive tool of environmental administrative control. It ensures that development activities align with environmental standards, promoting a balanced relationship between economic growth and the preservation of natural resources. Strengthening and expanding the EIA framework will enhance sustainable development efforts in Jordan.

###### **4.1.2. Supervision And Inspection (Revised Version)**

According to Article 15 of the Environmental Protection Law (2017), environmental management authorities are mandated to conduct monitoring and inspection operations in facilities belonging to public, private, and civil institutions whose activities are classified as low or high environmental risk. The

purpose of these inspections is to ensure compliance with the environmental standards and conditions stipulated in the relevant legislation.

Article 2 of the Environmental Protection Law (2017) defines an environmental inspector as “a competent employee appointed by the Minister, or an employee of an entity authorized in writing by the Minister, to carry out environmental inspection duties at facilities in order to ensure compliance with the provisions of this Law and the regulations and instructions issued pursuant thereto.”

Environmental inspectors perform two primary types of functions: administrative control tasks and judicial control tasks. An example of the latter is the Environmental Protection Police, which operates administratively under the Ministry of Interior but maintains a technical relationship with the Ministry of Environment pursuant to Environmental Protection Management System No. 37 of 2018. The Ministry of Environment is responsible for providing the Environmental Protection Police with logistical support, including facilities, monitoring equipment, communication devices, vehicles, and operational tools.

From an administrative perspective, the core purpose of environmental supervision is to inspect and monitor economic activities with potential environmental impacts. Inspectors are authorized to enter facilities suspected of violating environmental requirements and to conduct field visits to verify compliance and identify violations (Al-Khraisat, 2025). In performing monitoring and inspection functions, administrative authorities must adhere strictly to the principle of legality, ensuring that their actions remain within the scope of environmental protection objectives.

Supervision and inspection therefore constitute one of the most essential functions of environmental administration. These activities ensure that facilities' actual practices align with environmental plans and standards, and they play a critical role in assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of operations related to conserving and sustaining natural resources.

#### **4.1.3. Administrative Penalties (Revised Version)**

Violations of environmental laws and regulations result in the imposition of financial or administrative sanctions on offenders, including fines, temporary closure of facilities, suspension of activities, or the revocation of licenses. These sanctions constitute essential tools for ensuring compliance and for preventing practices that threaten natural resources (Morsi, 2011, p. 242). Administrative penalties may

be categorized as follows:

##### **First: Non-economic Administrative Sanctions**

Several provisions of the Environmental Protection Law (2017) authorize the imposition of administrative sanctions such as the temporary closure of establishments or the suspension of their activities in cases of non-compliance with environmental standards and requirements. Such measures may be applied whenever environmental harm occurs or when natural resources are exploited in ways that directly undermine environmental integrity and the sustainability of the project's activities.

The French legislator also provides for administrative sanctions in environmental legislation. Under French law, both municipal mayors and the competent minister possess the authority to impose sanctions—including the cancellation of licenses and the closure of establishments—in cases where environmental obligations are violated (Hinfray, 1986, p. 68).

Given that environmental administrative control is the mechanism empowered to enforce environmental protection laws, administrative authorities are legally authorized to take a range of actions to deter violations. Through these powers, the administration may impose sanctions on any individual or entity that breaches legal provisions related to environmental protection, thereby preventing actions that pose a risk to the environment (Al-Wreikat, 2025).

#### **4.2. Temporary Closure Of The Facility Or Total/Partial Suspension Of Activity**

The administrative decision to temporarily close a facility or suspend its operations—whether wholly or partially—is considered one of the most serious administrative measures that may be imposed for non-compliance with environmental regulations. Such measures are justified by the nature and severity of the environmental violation committed. These urgent actions aim to mitigate immediate threats to natural resources by obliging the facility to halt harmful operations, such as shutting down unlicensed wells or suspending environmentally damaging activities until the causes of the violation are addressed and compliance is achieved (Environmental Protection Law, 2017).

Suspension of activity is defined as “an administrative decision taken by environmental protection bodies—within the limits of their legal powers—to prevent a facility from carrying out its activity, in whole or in part, due to non-compliance with environmental laws and regulations” (Abdullah

& Mahmoud, 2020, p. 153).

Accordingly, the closure of facilities or the suspension of their activities constitutes an administrative sanction imposed on the violator and, by extension, on the workers affected by the cessation of work (Al-Khraisat, 2025). This sanction results in economic losses for the violator, thereby compelling the responsible party to take corrective measures to eliminate the environmental harm and restore conditions to conformity with the law (Mukhalif, 2007, p. 319).

#### 4.2.2. License Withdrawal Or Cancellation

The withdrawal or revocation of a license is another important administrative mechanism used to prevent environmental harm. This measure provides preventive legal protection by enabling the administrative authority to withdraw a previously granted license when the holder violates environmental requirements or conditions (Mukhalif, 2007, p. 321). For instance, the Agriculture Law (2015) stipulates the revocation of licenses granted for private forestry investment if the licensee breaches environmental conditions.

License withdrawal is defined as “a means by which the State intervenes in an individual’s activity by withdrawing a license after having previously allowed engagement in a specific and legally permitted activity” (Gabriel, 1998, p. 68). Administrative authorities responsible for environmental protection may revoke licenses when environmental conditions are violated, making this measure a form of administrative sanction.

#### 4.3.3. Administrative Removal

Administrative removal refers to an administrative decision issued by competent authorities to eliminate acts that violate environmental laws and regulations, along with their resulting impacts, without granting the offender the right to claim compensation (Ghanem, 1995, p. 12).

This procedure is used by administrative authorities when violations result in environmental damage, provided that the removal is conducted within the bounds of the law. A review of Jordanian environmental legislation reveals that it obliges violators to remedy environmental damage at their own expense (Environmental Protection Law, 2017). Likewise, the Agriculture Law (2015) requires any person who unlawfully exploits forest lands—by establishing quarries or sand pits—to restore the land to its original condition.

#### Secondly: Administrative Financial Penalties

Administrative financial penalties constitute an

important enforcement tool used by environmental control agencies to deter violations of environmental protection laws. These sanctions vary according to the degree and nature of the violation and are primarily applied in the following forms:

#### 1. Financial Fines

Financial fines are imposed on individuals, companies, or institutions that violate environmental laws and regulations. Their primary purpose is deterrence and the protection of natural resources (Zangana, 2012, p. 340). These fines differ from judicial fines, as they are imposed directly by administrative authorities without court intervention. The amount of the fine is determined based on the seriousness of the violation and the extent of the resulting environmental damage, as specified in relevant legal texts (Environmental Protection Law, 2017).

Typical violations that warrant administrative fines include water pollution, the dumping of hazardous waste without proper treatment, illegal deforestation, and encroachment on protected areas. Environmental legislation also provides for stricter penalties in cases of repeated violations. For example, Article 38/4 of the Agriculture Law (2015) stipulates that anyone who extracts, cuts, uproots, or burns cultivated or wild plants shall be fined three times the material value of each plant.

Another form of administrative fine is the administrative settlement, where the administration and the violator agree on the amount and method of payment. Although framed as an agreement, it is effectively imposed by the administration, leaving the violator with little choice. This approach is justified by the objective assessment of the environmental harm caused and the need to mitigate its consequences.

#### 2. Administrative Forfeiture

Administrative forfeiture is another measure provided for in Jordanian environmental legislation. It serves as a strong enforcement mechanism aimed at protecting natural resources from illegal exploitation. For example, the Agriculture Law (2015) mandates the confiscation of forest materials and cutting tools used in unlawful logging activities.

Forfeiture must be implemented within a legal framework that safeguards individual rights and prevents abuses of administrative power. It is defined as “a measure taken by the administrative authority to confiscate property without a court order, for reasons related to public interest, public order, security, or environmental protection” (Bassiouni, 2007, p. 159).

Administrative forfeiture differs from judicial

confiscation in that it is imposed through an administrative decision rather than a judicial ruling. It may take several forms:

- An original administrative sanction for activities harmful to the environment;
- A supplementary or precautionary measure, such as the seizure of equipment causing damage;
- An alternative to an administrative fine, where tools or equipment are confiscated until fines are paid (Environmental Protection Law, 2017).

### 3. Administrative Detention

Administrative detention is a measure used by competent authorities to curb severe environmental violations, particularly those threatening marine environments or water resources. It is implemented under several provisions of environmental legislation that authorize immediate intervention when environmental harm is imminent (Kanaan, 2019, p. 98).

Administrative detention may take two forms:

#### 1. Temporary detention for a fixed period

For instance, Article 26(c) of the Agriculture Law (2015) stipulates that any driver caught transporting forest materials without a license shall be subject to penalties and that the vehicle shall be impounded for one month at the nearest police station (Al-Khraisat, 2025).

#### 2. Precautionary seizure until fines are paid

Article 21 of the Environmental Protection Law (2017) states that any person who discharges harmful substances into the marine environment shall have their tools and equipment seized until the imposed fine is paid.

### 4.4. Advance Environmental Planning

The Ministry of Environment serves as the national focal point for environmental protection in Jordan. Other ministries and public institutions integrate environmental considerations into their sectoral strategies and action plans, particularly in areas related to natural resource management. Their strategic vision emphasizes developing policies and activities while incorporating the outcomes of administrative oversight procedures into planning frameworks related to agriculture, water, tourism, energy, transportation, urban planning, and municipal development. The objective is to ensure equitable resource distribution, prevent depletion, and strengthen long-term sustainability.

At the administrative level, the Ministry of Environment—together with the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature—prepares

environmental management plans for nature reserves. These plans represent structured management tools tailored to the specific conditions of each protected area. They are dynamic documents that undergo periodic updates and modifications when necessary. This process forms an integral part of the institutional mechanism adopted by the Ministry of Environment under the Environmental Protection Law and its related regulations and instructions. Consequently, protected area management plans constitute a core component of national policy for nature conservation, prepared in coordination with a range of national partners (Ministry of Environment, 2022).

### 4.5. Objectives Of Environmental Administrative Control (Revised Version)

Environmental administrative control aims to regulate the exploitation of natural resources in ways that safeguard the environment and promote sustainability. This regulatory function is grounded in a set of policies designed to maintain environmental balance, achieve environmental justice, prevent resource depletion, and ensure the long-term availability of natural assets. The key objectives include:

- Preventing Resource Depletion

The overuse of natural resources leads to severe environmental degradation and biodiversity loss. In Jordan, this includes declining groundwater levels, shrinking forest areas, and increased pressure on mineral resources. Environmental administrative control plays a vital role in preventing depletion by enforcing laws and regulations that restrict overexploitation.

Jordan suffers from acute water scarcity. Well drilling is prohibited in areas experiencing declining groundwater levels because renewable water extraction exceeds natural recharge rates. According to the Ministry of Water and Irrigation (2024), authorities confiscated and sealed 92 illegal wells in a single year. As a result of overexploitation, groundwater and surface water quality have deteriorated, and the available water supply is insufficient to meet rising demand. Excessive groundwater pumping has also caused agricultural lands to dry up, while the financial costs of developing new water sources continue to rise (WWF).

Agricultural land constitutes no more than 4% of Jordan's total area, and forest cover is less than 1%. Jordanian law prohibits logging without permits, and strict limits are imposed on forest cutting in order to control deforestation and maintain

ecological regeneration capacity (Agricultural Law, 2015).

- Ensuring Ecological Balance

Ecological balance refers to managing human activities in ways that do not exceed the carrying capacity of ecosystems. Environmental administrative control sets limits on polluting emissions, excessive resource use, and harmful land-use practices (Rashwan, 2006, p. 73). For this reason, any new industrial or urban project must undergo an Environmental Impact Assessment before approval to ensure that it does not disrupt ecological integrity.

- Achieving Environmental Justice

Environmental justice ensures the fair distribution of natural resources so that their benefits do not accrue disproportionately to one social group at the expense of others. In Jordan, this includes equitable allocation of water between regions experiencing scarcity, and balancing water use between rural and urban communities (National Water Strategy, 2023–2040). The objective is to prevent forms of environmental inequality that intensify social and economic disparities.

- Preserving Community Rights

Environmental administrative control contributes to protecting community rights by improving living standards, enhancing income levels, and promoting economic prosperity (Abu Madallah & Moroccan, 2018, p. 36). These rights help prevent the exploitation of communal lands, particularly those belonging to Indigenous or vulnerable communities. When water, land, or energy resources become inaccessible to disadvantaged communities, environmental, social, and economic problems intensify.

This dynamic is reflected in the classic model explained by Khan (1995) and Basiago (1999), which illustrates how poverty can drive environmentally harmful practices—such as cutting trees for fuel—leading to soil degradation, loss of nutrients, declining productivity, and deepening cycles of poverty and marginalization.

- Achieving Sustainable Development

Environmental administrative control is one of the essential tools for ensuring sustainable development across generations. Its purpose is to achieve fairness in resource distribution, ensuring that present generations do not consume natural resources in ways that deprive future generations. Raising awareness through educational programs—particularly in schools—helps cultivate environmentally responsible behavior among young people and supports long-term sustainability (Al-Zoubi, 2000, p. 15).

#### ***4.6. Challenges Facing Environmental Administrative Control In Achieving Natural Resource Sustainability***

Jordan faces several interconnected challenges that directly affect the effectiveness of environmental administrative control in achieving sustainable development goals and ensuring the sustainable management of natural resources. These challenges can be categorized as follows:

#### ***4.7. Challenges Related To Environmental Legislation***

##### ***4.7.1. Incomplete Coverage Of Legal Texts For All Aspects Of Resource Protection***

Despite the clarity of environmental objectives outlined in Jordanian legislation, practical implementation remains limited due to weak executive capacity and insufficient deterrent measures. Sustainable development cannot be achieved through isolated initiatives by individual institutions; rather, it requires integrated efforts across all legal, social, environmental, and economic dimensions.

In contrast, countries such as France have developed integrated institutional systems, advanced environmental legislation, and a strong official understanding of the importance of environmental protection—providing a model of legislative coherence that complements administrative work.

##### ***4.7.2 Multiplicity Of Environmental Legislation And Overlapping Mandates***

The presence of numerous legislative instruments—such as the Environmental Protection Law, the Agriculture Law, the Water Authority Law, and the Public Health Law—has resulted in overlapping powers among regulatory agencies. This overlap creates legal ambiguity, weakens enforcement mechanisms, and complicates coordination among institutions responsible for environmental protection.

##### ***4.7.3. Administrative Challenges***

##### ***4.7.4. Weak Institutional Coordination***

A major administrative challenge is the lack of systematic coordination among agencies responsible for environmental protection. Responsibilities often overlap between the Ministry of Environment, municipalities, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, and the Ministry of Health (Alrfoua, 2024). This fragmentation leads to

inconsistencies in policy implementation and reduces the effectiveness of environmental administrative oversight.

The absence of a unified mechanism for assigning responsibilities weakens institutional performance and hinders the smooth execution of environmental legislation (Ministry of Environment, 2022).

#### **4.7.5. Shortage Of Qualified Technical Personnel**

A limited number of skilled and specialized personnel hampers the proper implementation of environmental measures. This shortage is largely due to inadequate training programs, insufficient capacity-building initiatives, and a general lack of professionals with expertise in environmental management and technical inspection (Voluntary National Report, 2022).

#### **4.7.6 Low Environmental Awareness In Society**

Public engagement is essential for achieving sustainable development, as individuals are considered partners in the protection of natural resources. However, low environmental awareness among citizens and investors often creates resistance to environmental regulations.

This lack of awareness stems from insufficient public outreach campaigns, limited integration of environmental concepts in educational curricula, and a general undervaluation of environmental legislation (Abu Sneina & Ayash, 2013). Increasing public participation is therefore necessary to promote responsible consumption, production, and environmental behavior.

#### **4.7.7. Limited Accountability And Monitoring Of Progress Toward The Sustainable Development Goals (Sdgs)**

Achieving the SDGs requires reliable indicators and robust monitoring tools. Jordan continues to face challenges in measuring inputs and outputs to assess the effectiveness of administrative actions aimed at addressing environmental issues. There is also insufficient monitoring of outcomes to determine whether the environmental dimensions of natural resource sustainability are being met (Mohieldin, 2018; Awaisheh, 2023).

These deficiencies restrict the ability of administrative bodies to evaluate progress accurately and adjust policies when necessary.

### **4.8. Conclusion of the Challenges Section**

The challenges outlined above significantly influence the effectiveness of environmental

administrative control in Jordan. Nevertheless, the government is working to address these issues by:

- enhancing coordination among relevant agencies;
- strengthening technical and administrative capacities;
- continuously updating environmental legislation;
- intensifying community awareness programs;
- integrating the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda into national and sectoral strategies.

These efforts are aligned with national planning frameworks, particularly those outlined in the Jordan 2025 strategy and the Second Voluntary National Review (2022), ensuring that administrative control contributes effectively to sustainable development and natural resource protection.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

Environmental administrative control forms a central pillar in achieving environmental protection and advancing sustainable development, particularly in countries with limited natural resources such as Jordan. Although legislative and administrative efforts in recent years reflect a growing institutional interest in environmental governance, the practical effectiveness of these measures remain constrained by legislative fragmentation, administrative overlap, and technical limitations. Achieving sustainable and equitable management of natural resources therefore requires a comprehensive reform of the administrative control system, strengthening monitoring tools, enhancing institutional coordination, and promoting societal engagement to safeguard the rights of future generations to a healthy and balanced environment.

Considering the analysis presented, the study reached a set of key results and recommendations.

### **5.1. Results**

1. Environmental administrative control constitutes an essential mechanism for achieving the environmental dimension of sustainable development, particularly through regulating the exploitation of natural resources and preventing their depletion. Despite the existence of a specialized environmental protection agency, a gap persists between legal provisions and actual enforcement due to institutional and human-capacity constraints.
2. The multiplicity of regulatory authorities and overlapping mandates weakens coordination, resulting in inconsistent enforcement and a lack of systematic accountability for

environmental violations.

3. Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) are applied at the project level, but their absence in policy-level and strategic planning processes limits their effectiveness and reduces their capacity to protect natural resources comprehensively.
4. Administrative oversight contributes to both preventive and corrective environmental protection, helping to identify encroachments and propose suitable administrative and legislative solutions (Awaisheh, 2023).
5. Official awareness of environmental priorities has increased, yet societal awareness remains weak, affecting rational resource use and limiting community participation in environmental decision-making.
6. Persistent environmental pressures—such as deforestation, overgrazing, and groundwater depletion—continue to threaten ecological stability due to insufficient deterrence and enforcement capacities.
7. Legislative proliferation, weak institutional coordination, and shortages in technical expertise remain among the most significant obstacles affecting the effectiveness of environmental administrative control.

## 5.2. Academic Contribution

This study contributes to the growing body of legal research on environmental governance in Jordan by providing an integrated analytical framework that connects administrative control tools with sustainable natural resource management. It highlights legislative and institutional gaps that have not been sufficiently addressed in previous studies and offers a comprehensive evaluation of the interaction between environmental legislation, administrative practice, and sustainability principles. The study also enriches comparative legal research by drawing lessons from the French model of integrated environmental oversight.

## 5.3. Future Research Avenues

Future studies may explore:

- The development of a unified environmental code in Jordan to consolidate scattered legislation into a single, coherent legal

framework.

- The feasibility and impacts of establishing a specialized environmental judiciary, and its expected role in strengthening deterrence and improving legal outcomes.
- Comparative assessments of digital environmental monitoring tools, such as blockchain-based waste tracking or AI-assisted pollution detection.
- The role of local communities and decentralized governance models in enhancing environmental administrative control.
- Evaluating the socio-economic effects of environmental control policies, especially on vulnerable and resource-dependent communities.

These directions can support policymakers in designing reforms that are both environmentally effective and socially equitable.

## 5.4. Recommendations

1. Reinforce the independence and institutional capacity of the Ministry of Environment—financially, administratively, and technically—to effectively oversee environmental activities.
2. Incorporate the environmental dimension within the concept of public order in Jordanian administrative law to strengthen the legal basis for environmental intervention.
3. Establish an integrated national agency for environmental administrative control to unify oversight efforts under a coordinated institutional framework.
4. Enhance technological systems for environmental monitoring, including the use of drones, satellites, and real-time pollution sensors.
5. Integrate environmental education into school curricula and expand public awareness campaigns to promote community oversight.
6. Encourage the establishment of a specialized environmental judiciary to expedite dispute resolution and strengthen environmental deterrence.
7. Draw on successful international experiences in decentralized environmental oversight and community-based resource monitoring.

**Acknowledgements:** The authors acknowledge their respective institutional affiliations.

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